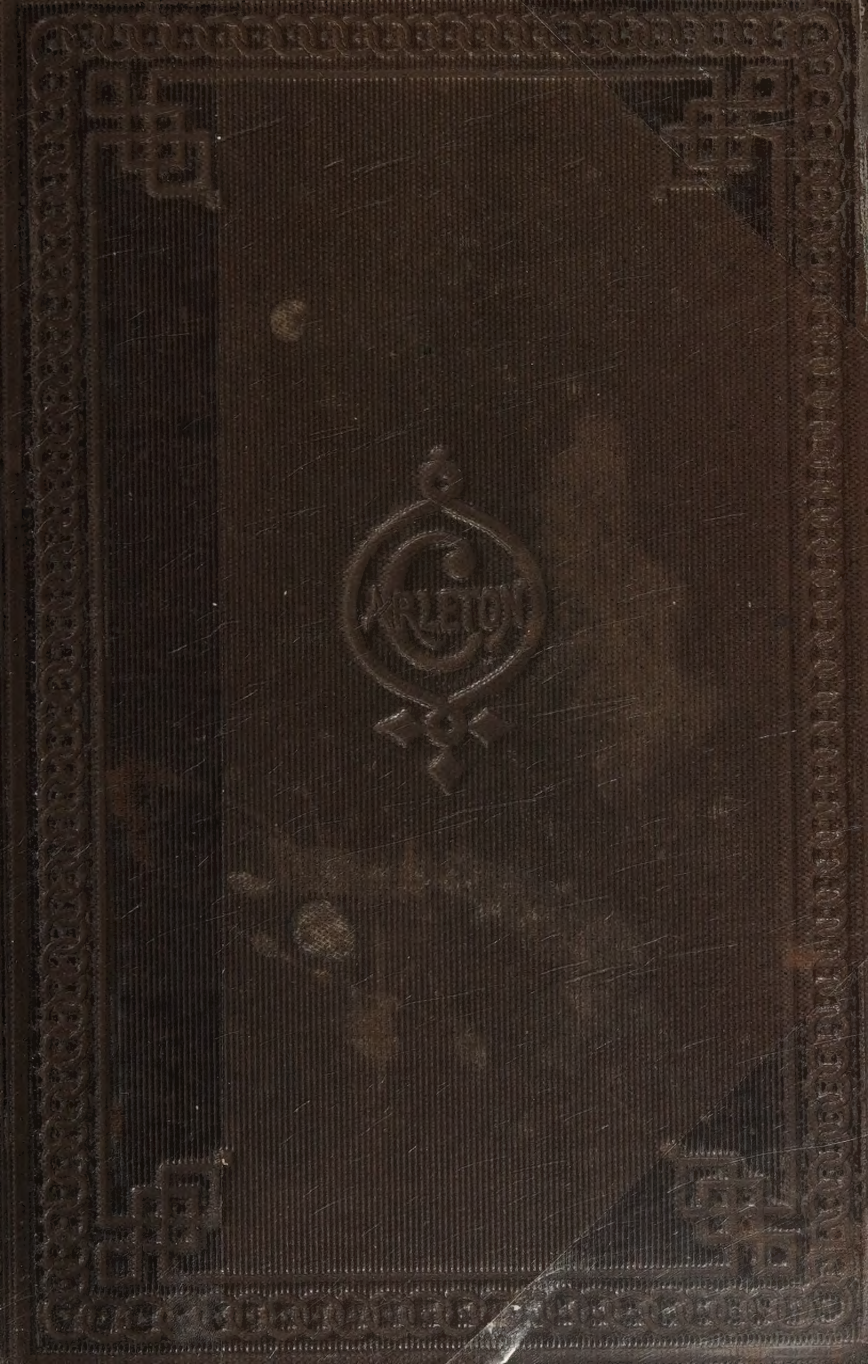

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BY

ERNEST RENAN

MEMBRE DE L'INSTITUT.

TRANSLATED FROM THE ORIGINAL FRENCH BY

CHARLES EDWIN WILBOUR

TRANSLATOR OF LES MISERABLES.

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TO THE PURE SPIRIT

OF MY SISTER HENRIETTE,

WHO DIED AT BYBLUS, SEPTEMBER 24TH, 1861.

Do you remember, from your rest in the bosom of God, those long days at Ghazir, where, alone with you, I wrote these pages, inspired by the scenes we had just traversed? Silent by my side, you read every leaf, and copied it as soon as written, while the sea, the villages, the ravines, the mountains, were spread out at our feet. When the overwhelming light of the sun had given place to the innumerable army of the stars, your fine and delicate questions, your discreet doubts, brought me back to the sublime object of our common thoughts. One

day you told me that you should love this book, first, because it had been written with you, and also because it pleased you. If sometimes you feared for it the narrow judgments of the frivolous man, you were always persuaded that spirits truly religious would be pleased with it. In the midst of these sweet meditations Death struck us both with his wing; the sleep of fever seized us both at the same hour; I awoke alone! . . . You sleep now in the land of Adonis, near the holy Byblus and the sacred waters where the women of the ancient mysteries came to mingle their tears. Reveal to me, O my good genius, to me whom you loved, those truths which master Death, prevent us from fearing, and make us almost love it.

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INTRODUCTION.

WHICH TREATS PRINCIPALLY OF THE SOURCES OF THIS HISTORY.

A HISTORY of the "Origins of Christianity" would embrace the obscure and, if I may use the word, subterranean period which extends from the first beginnings of this religion to the time when its existence becomes a public, well-known fact, evident to the eyes of all men. Such a history would consist of four books. The first, which I now present to the public, treats of the event itself which served as the starting-point of the new worship; it is entirely filled by the sublime person of the founder. The second would treat of the apostles and their immediate disciples, or rather of the revolutions in religious thought of the first two Christian generations. I would close it about the year 100, when the last friends of Jesus have died, and all the books of the New Testament have become fixed very nearly in the form in which we read them. The third would set forth the condition of Christianity under the Antonines, slowly developing, and maintaining an almost permanent war against the empire, which having now reached the highest degree of administrative perfection and being governed by philosophers, combats in the infant sect a society secret and

theocratic, that denies it obstinately and undermines it incessantly. This book would comprise the whole of the second century. Finally, the fourth book would show the decisive progress of Christianity from the time of the Syrian emperors. In it the wise construction of the Antonines would be seen falling in pieces, he decay of the ancient civilization becoming irrevocable, Christianity profiting by its ruin, Syria conquering the whole West, and Jesus, in company with the gods and divinized sages of Asia, taking possession of a society to which philosophy and a purely civil government no longer suffice. Then it is that the religious ideas of the races grouped about the Mediterranean are radically modified, oriental religions everywhere assume the ascendancy, Christianity, having become a mighty church, entirely forgets its millennial dreams, breaks its last connection with Judaism, and passes entirely into the Greek and Latin world. The literary struggles and labors of the third century, already public matters, would be set forth only in general terms. I should relate still more briefly the persecutions of the commencement of the fourth century, the last effort of the empire to return to its old principles, which denied religious association any place in the State. In conclusion, I should merely foreshadow the change of policy which, under Constantine, inverted conditions, and made of the freest and most spontaneous religious movement, an official religion, subjected to the State and persecuting in its turn.

I know not that I shall have enough of life and ability to complete a plan so vast. I shall be satisfied if, after having written the life of Jesus, it is given to me to relate, as I understand it, the history of the apostles,

the condition of the Christian consciousness during the weeks which followed the death of Jesus, the formation of the legendary cycle of the resurrection, the first acts of the church of Jerusalem, the life of St. Paul, the crisis of the time of Nero, the vision of the Apocalypse, the fall of Jerusalem, the foundation of the Hebraic christianisms of Batanea, the compilation of the gospels, the origin of the great schools of Asia Minor, sprung from John. Every thing pales beside this marvellous first century. By a singularity rare in history, we see much more clearly what passed in the Christian world from the year 50 to the year 75, than from the year 100 to the year 150.

The plan followed in this history has prevented the introduction into the text of long critical dissertations on controverted points. A continuous system of notes gives the reader the means of verifying by their sources all the propositions of the text. In these notes, I have strictly confined myself to citations from first hand, I mean to the indication of the original passages upon which each assertion or each conjecture rests. I know that to persons little acquainted with these studies, many other developments would have been necessary. But I am unaccustomed to doing over again what has been done and well done. To cite only books written in French, those who will procure the following works:

Etudes critiques sur l'Evangile de saint Matthieu, par M. Albert Reville, pasteur de l'église wallonne de Rotterdam.*

Histoire de la théologie chrètienne au siècle apostolique, par M. Reuss,

* Leyden, Noothoven van Goor, 1862. Paris, Cherbuliez. A book crowned by the Society of the Hague for the defense of the Christian religion.

professeur à la Faculté de théologie et au séminaire protestant de Strasbourg.*

Des Doctrines Religieuses des Juifs pendant les deux siècles antérieurs à l'ère Chrètienne, par M. Michel Nicolas, professeur à la Faculté de theologie protestante de Montauban.†

Vie de Jésus, par le Dr. Strauss, traduite par M. Littré, membre de l'institut.‡

Revue de théologie et de philosophie chrétienne, publiée sous la direction de M. Colani, de 1850 à 1857.—*Nouvelle Revue de théologie*, faisant suite à la précédente, depuis 1858.§

—those, I say, who will consult these excellent works, ‖ will find in them the explanation of a multitude of points upon which I have been compelled to be very succinct. The criticism in detail of the texts of the gospels, in particular, has been done by M. Strauss in a manner which leaves little to be desired. Although M. Strauss is mistaken in his theory of the compilation of the gospels,¶ and his book has, as I think; the fault of looking too much from the theological and too little from the historical point of view,** it is indispensable, in order to understand the motives which have guided me in a great number of details,

* Strasbourg, Treuttel et Wurtz. 2e edition, 1860. Paris, Cherbuliez.

† Paris, Michel Levy freres, 1860.

‡ Paris, Ladrange, 2e edition, 1856.

§ Strasbourg, Treuttel et Wurtz. Paris, Cherbuliez.

‖ While these pages are being printed, a book has appeared which I do not hesitate to add to the preceding, although I have not been able to read it with the attention which it deserves: *Les Evangiles*, par M. Gustave d'Eichthal. Premiere partie: *Examen critique et comparatif des trois premiers evangiles.* Paris, Hachette, 1863.

¶ The great results obtained on this point were not reached until after the first edition of M. Strauss's work. The learned critic, has, however, done justice to them in his succeeding editions with much frankness.

** It is hardly necessary to say that there is not a word in M. Strauss's book to justify the strange and absurd calumny by which an attempt has been made to discredit among superficial people, a proper, exact, acute and conscientious book, though spoiled in its general portions by an exclusive system. Not only has M. Strauss never denied the existence of Jesus, but every page of his book implies this existence. The truth is that M. Strauss supposes that the individual character of Jesus is more obscured to us than perhaps it really is.

to follow the discussions, always judicious though sometimes rather subtle, of the book so well translated by my learned brother, M. Littré.

I believe that I have neglected, among ancient authorities, no source of information. Five great collections of writings, not to speak of a multitude of other scattered data, remain to us in regard to Jesus and the time in which he lived: first, the gospels and the writings of the New Testament generally; second, the compositions called the "Apocrypha of the Old Testament;" third, the works of Philo; fourth, those of Josephus; fifth, the Talmud. The writings of Philo have the inestimable advantage of showing us what thoughts were fermenting in the time of Jesus in souls occupied with great religious questions. Philo lived, it is true, in quite another province of Judaism, but like Jesus he was very free from the littlenesses which reigned at Jerusalem; Philo is truly the elder brother of Jesus. He was sixty-two years old when the prophet of Nazareth was at the highest degree of his activity, and he survived him at least ten years. What a misfortune that the chances of life did not lead him into Galilee! What would he not have taught us!

Josephus, writing principally for the pagans, has not the same sincerity in his style. His brief notices of Jesus, John the Baptist, and Judas the Gaulonite, are dry and colorless. We feel that he is seeking to present these movements so thoroughly Jewish in character and spirit, under a form which may be intelligible to the Greeks and Romans. I think the passage on Jesus authentic.* It is perfectly in the

* *Ant.*, XVIII, III, 3.

style of Josephus, and if this historian had made mention of Jesus, it would have been in that way. We perceive only that some Christian hand has retouched the fragment, has added a few words without which it would have been almost blasphemous,* and has perhaps curtailed or modified some expressions.† We must remember that the literary fortune of Josephus was made by the Christians, who adopted his writings as documents essential to their sacred history. There was put out, probably in the second century, an edition corrected according to the Christian ideas.‡ But at all events, what constitutes the great interest of Josephus for the subject before us, is the vivid light which he throws upon the period. Thanks to him, Herod, Herodias, Antipater, Philip, Annas, Caiaphas, and Pilate are persons upon whom we put our finger, and whom we see living before us with striking reality.

The Apocrypha of the Old Testament, especially the Jewish portion of the Sybilline verses, and the Book of Enoch, taken with the Book of Daniel, which also is really apocryphal, are of cardinal importance for the history of the development of the Messianic theories, and for the understanding of the conceptions of Jesus in regard to the kingdom of God. The Book of Enoch, in particular, which was very much read in the region of Jesus,‖ gives the key to the expression "Son of

* "If it be lawful to call him a man."

† Instead of χριστὸς οὗτος ἦν it was certainly χριστὸς οὗτος ἐλέγετο. *Cf. Ant.*, XX ix, 1.

‡ Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.*, I, 11, and *Demonst. evang.*, III, 5,) quotes the passage on Jesus as we now read it in Josephus. Origen (*Contra Cels.*, I, 47; II, 13,) and Eusebius (*Hist. eccl.*, II, 23,) quote another Christian interpolation, which is found in none of the manuscripts of Josephus that have reached us.

‖ Judæ Epist., 14.

man," and the ideas which were associated with it. The age of these different books, thanks to the labors of Messrs. Alexandre, Ewald, Dillmann, and Reuss, is now fixed beyond doubt. All now agree in placing the compilation of the more important of them in the second and first centuries before Christ. The date of the Book of Daniel is still more certain. The character of the two languages in which it is written; the use of Greek words; the clear announcement, determinate and dated, of events as late as the time of Antiochus Epiphanes; the false images of ancient Babylon traced in it; the general coloring of the book, which reminds us in no wise of the writings of the captivity, which corresponds on the contrary, by a multitude of analogies, with the beliefs, the manners, and the peculiar fancies of the time of the Seleucidæ; the apocalyptic character of the visions; the place of the book in the Hebrew canon after the series of the prophets; the omission of Daniel, in the panegyrics of the XXIX.th chapter of Ecclesiasticus, in which his rank was, as it were, indicated; many other evidences which have been deduced a hundred times, leave no doubt that the Book of Daniel was the fruit of the great exaltation produced among the Jews by the persecution of Antiochus Not in the old prophetic literature must this book be classed, but rather at the head of the apocalyptic literature, as the first model of a style of composition in which were to take their places after it, the various sibylline poems, the Book of Enoch, the Apocalypse of John, the Ascension of Isaiah, and the fourth book of Esdras.

In the history of the origins of Christianity, the Talmud has hitherto been far too much neglected. I think, with

M. Geiger, that the true idea of the circumstances amid which Jesus was brought forth, must be sought in this strange compilation, where so much precious information is mingled with the most insignificant scholasticism. Christian theology and Jewish theology having really followed two parallel paths, the history of either cannot be well understood without the history of the other. Numberless material details of the gospels find, moreover, their commentary in the Talmud. The vast Latin collections of Lightfoot, Schœttgen, Buxtorf, and Otho, contain a mass of such information. I have made it a rule to verify in the original every quotation which I have made, without a single exception. The aid which has been rendered me in this portion of my labor, by a learned Israelite, M. Neubauer, who is exceedingly well versed in Talmudic literature, has enabled me to go still further, and to clear up the most delicate portions of my subject by some new comparisons. The distinction of epochs is here very important, the compilation of the Talmud extending from the year 200 to the year 500, nearly. We have brought to this as much discrimination as is possible in the present condition of these studies. Dates so recent will excite some fears among persons accustomed to accord value to a document only for the period at which it was written. But such scruples would here be out of place. The teaching of the Jews from the Asmonean epoch to the second century, was principally oral. We must not judge such intellectua conditions after the habitudes of a time in which mucl is written. The Vedas, the ancient Arab poems, were preserved by memory for centuries, and yet these compositions present a very definite and very delicate

form. In the Talmud on the contrary, the form is of no account. We must add, that before the *Mischna* of Judah the Holy, which superseded all the rest, there were attempts at compilation, the first of which date back perhaps further than is commonly supposed. The style of the Talmud is that of running notes; the compilers probably did nothing more than to class under certain titles this enormous mass of rubbish which had been accumulating in the different schools for generations.

We have yet to speak of the documents which, being presented as biographies of the founder of Christianity, must of course hold the first place in a life of Jesus. A complete treatise on the compilation of the gospels would be a volume of itself. Thanks to the thorough studies of which this question has been the subject for thirty years, a problem that would formerly have been deemed impossible, has reached a solution which leaves room for much uncertainty, but which is amply sufficient for the demands of history. We shall have occasion to return to this in our second book, the composition of the gospels having been one of the most important events to the future of Christianity which occurred during the second half of the first century. We shall here touch but a single phase of the subject, that which is indispensable to the substantiation of our narrative. Leaving aside all that belongs to the description of the apostolic times, we shall inquire only to what extent the data furnished by the gospels may be employed in a history projected upon rational principles.*

Let the gospels be in part legendary, that is evident since they are full of miracles and the supernatural;

* Those who wish more ample developments may consult besides the work

but there are different species of legends. Nobody doubts the principal traits of the life of Francis d'Assisi, though in it the supernatural is met at every step. Nobody, on the contrary, gives credence to the "Life of Apollonius of Tyana," because it was written long after its hero, and under the conditions of a pure romance. At what period, by what hands, under what conditions were the gospels compiled? This is the capital question upon which depends the opinion that we must form of their credibility.

We know that each of the four gospels bears at its head the name of a person known either in the apostolic history or in the gospel history itself. These four persons are not presented to us strictly as authors. The formulæ "according to Matthew," "according to Mark," "according to Luke," "according to John," do not imply that in the oldest opinion, these narratives had been written from one end to the other by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John;* they signify only that those were the traditions coming from each of these apostles, and covered by their authority. It is clear that if these titles are exact, the gospels, without ceasing to be in part legendary, assume a high value, since they carry us back to the half century following the death of Jesus, and even, in two cases, to eye-witnesses of his acts.

As to Luke, in the first place, doubt is hardly possible. Luke's gospel is a regular composition, founded on anterior documents.† It is the work of a man who

of M. Reville already cited, the labors of Messrs. Reuss and Scherer in the *Revue de theologie*, t. X. XI, XV, nouv. serie II III IV, and that of M. Nicolas in the *Revue germanique*, sept. et dec., 1862, avril et juin, 1863.

* So "The Gospel according to the Hebrews," "The Gospel according to the Egyptians."

† Luke, I, 1-4.

selects, prunes, combines. The author of this gospe is certainly the same as the author of the Acts of the Apostles.* Now the author of the Acts is a companion of St. Paul, † a title perfectly fitting to Luke.‡ I know that more than one objection may be interposed to this; but one thing at least is beyond doubt, that the author of the third gospel and of the Acts, is a man of the second apostolic generation, and that is enough for our purpose. The date of this gospel may, moreover, be determined with much precision by considerations drawn from the book itself. Chapter XXI, inseparable from the rest of the work, was certainly written after the siege of Jerusalem, and soon after.‖ We are here, therefore, on firm ground; for we have a work written entirely by the same hand, and of the most perfect unity.

The gospels of Matthew and Mark are far from having the same individual seal. They are impersonal compositions, in which the author totally disappears. A proper name written at the head of such works does not mean much. But if the gospel of Luke is dated, those of Matthew and Mark are also; for it is certain that the third gospel is posterior to the first, and presents the character of a compilation much more advanced. We have besides, in this respect, a most important testimonial of the first half of the second century. It is by Papias, bishop of Hierapolis, a man of weight, a man of tradition, who was all his life attentive to the collection of whatever could be learned of

* *Acts*, I, 1. Comp. Luke, I, 1–4.

† From XVI, 10 onward, the author speaks as an eye-witness.

‡ 2 Tim., IV, 11; Philem., 24; Col., IV, 14. The name *Lucas* (a contraction of *Lucanus*) being very rare, we need fear none of those homonymies which throw so many perplexities over critical questions relative to the New Testament.

‖ Verses 9, 20, 24, 28, 32 Comp. XXII, 36.

the person of Jesus.* After declaring that in such a matter he prefers oral tradition to books, Papias mentions two written works on the words and deeds of Christ: first, a work of Mark, the interpreter of the apostle Peter, brief, incomplete, not arranged in chronological order, comprising narratives and sayings (λεχθέντα ἢ πραχθέντα), composed from the accounts and reminiscences of the apostle Peter; secondly, a collection of sayings (λόγια) written in Hebrew† by Matthew, "and which everybody has translated as best he could." Certain it is that these two descriptions correspond very well to the general physiognomy of the two books now called "The Gospel according to Matthew," and "The Gospel according to Mark," the first characterized by its long discourses; the second, full of anecdote, much more exact than the first in regard to minute acts, brief to dryness, poor in discourses and badly composed. That these two works as we read them are absolutely similar to those which Papias read, cannot be maintained; in the first place, because the work of Matthew to Papias was composed exclusively of discourses in Hebrew, of which translations varying considerably were in circulation, and in the second place, because the work of Mark and that of Matthew were to him quite distinct, compiled without any concord, and, it seems, written in different languages. Now, in the present condition of the texts, the Gospel according to Matthew and the Gospel according to Mark present parallel passages so

* In Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.* III, 39. No doubt whatever can be raised as to the authenticity of this passage. Eusebius, in fact, far from exaggerating the authority of Papias, is embarrassed by his simplicity, his crude millenarianism, and explains it by treating him as a small mind. Comp. Irenæus, *Adv. hær.*, III, 1

† That is, in a Semitic dialect.

long and so perfectly identical that we must suppose, either that the final compiler of the first had the second before him, or that both have copied the same prototype. What appears most probable is that neither of Matthew nor of Mark have we the original compilations; that our two first gospels are already arrangements in which there has been an attempt to fill the hiatuses in one text by another. Each wished indeed to possess a complete copy. He who had only the discourses in his copy, desired to have the narratives, and vice versa. Thus "the Gospel according to Matthew" is found to have incorporated nearly all the anecdotes of Mark, and "the Gospel according to Mark" now contains a multitude of traits which come from the *Logia* of Matthew. Each moreover drew largely from the evangelical traditions continuing about him. These traditions are so far from having been exhausted by the gospels, that the Acts of the Apostles and the most ancient Fathers quote many sayings of Jesus which appear authentic, and which are not found in the gospels that we possess.

It is of small importance to our present object to carry this delicate analysis farther, and to endeavor to reconstruct in some manner, on the one hand, the original *Logia* of Matthew; on the other, the primitive narration as it flowed from the pen of Mark. The *Logia* are undoubtedly represented to us by the grand discourses of Jesus, which fill a considerable portion of the first gospel. These discourses form, indeed, when detached from the rest, a tolerably complete whole. As to the narratives of the first and second gospels, they seem to be based upon a common document, the text of which is found sometimes in one and

sometimes in the other, and of which the second gospel, as we now find it, is but a slightly modified reproduction. In other words, the system of the life of Jesus with the synoptics rests upon two original documents: first, the discourses of Jesus collected by the apostle Matthew; second, the collection of anecdotes and personal information which Mark wrote from Peter's reminiscences. We may say that we now have these two documents, mingled with matter from other sources, in the two first gospels, which bear not wrongfully the name of "Gospel according to Matthew," and "Gospel according to Mark."

There can be no doubt, at all events, that at a very early day the discourses of Jesus were reduced to writing in the Aramæan language, and that at an early day also his remarkable deeds were recorded. These were not texts settled and fixed dogmatically. Besides the gospels which have reached us, there were a multitude of others professing to represent the traditions of eye-witnesses.* Little importance was attached to these writings, and the collectors, like Papias, much preferred oral tradition.† As they believed the world near its end, they cared little to compose books for the future; it was important only to preserve in their hearts the living image of him whom they hoped soon to see again in the clouds. Hence the little authority which the evangelical texts possessed for a hundred and fifty years. There was no scrupl about inserting additions, combining them diversely, or completing some by others. The poor man who

* Luke, I, 1, 2; Origen, *Hom. in Luc.* I, init.; St. Jerome, *Comment in Mat.*, prol
† Papias, in Eusebius, *H. E.*, III, 39. Comp. Irenæus, *Adv. hær.*, III, II et III

has but one book, desires it to contain all that speaks to his heart. They lent these little rolls to one another: each transcribed on the margin of his copy the sayings and the parables which he found elsewhere, and which touched him.* The finest thing in the world thus resulted from an obscure and entirely popular elaboration. No compilation had absolute value. Justin, who often appeals to what he calls "the memoirs of the apostles,"† had before him a condition of the evangelical documents considerably differing from that which we have; at all events, he takes no care to cite them textually. The gospel quotations in the pseudo-Clementine writings of Ebionite origin, present the same character. The spirit was everything; the letter nothing. It was when tradition grew weak in the latter half of the second century that the texts bearing the names of the apostles assumed decisive authority and obtained the force of law.

Who does not see the preciousness of documents thus composed of the tender memories, of the simple recitals of the two first Christian generations, yet filled with the strong impression which the founder had made, and which seems long to have survived him? These gospels too, appear to come through that branch of the Christian family which was most closely allied to Jesus. The last labor of compilation, at least of the text which bears the name of Matthew, appears to have been done in one of the countries situated to the north-east of Palestine, such as Gaulonitis, Haouran

* Thus the beautiful story *John*, VIII, 1–11, has floated continually without finding its fixed place in the framework of the received gospels.

† Τὰ ἀπομνημονεύματα τῶν ἀποστόλων, ἃ καλεῖται εὐαγγέλια. Justin, *Apol.*, I, 33, 66, 67; *Dial cum Tryph.*, 10, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107

or Batanea, where many Christians took refuge during the Roman war, where the relatives of Jesus were still found in the second century,* and where the first Galilean direction was preserved longer than any where else.

Hitherto we have spoken only of the three gospels called synoptic. We have now to speak of the fourth that which bears the name of John. Here is much more ground for doubts, and the question is less near a solution. Papias, who belonged to the school of John, and who, if he had not heard him, as Irenæus will have it, had attended much upon his immediate disciples, among others Aristion, and he who was called *Presbyteros Joannes*, Papias, who had eagerly collected the oral narrations of this Aristion and *Presbyteros Joannes*, says not a word of a "Life of Jesus" written by John. Had any such mention been found in his work, Eusebius, who extracts from him all that is of value for the literary history of the apostolic century, would undoubtedly have remarked it. The intrinsic difficulties drawn from the reading of the fourth gospel itself are equally great. How is it that by the side of definite details, which savor so strongly of an eye-witness, we find such discourses, totally different from those of Matthew? How, by the side of a general plan of a life of Jesus, which appears much more satisfactory and exact than that of the synoptics, these singular passages in which we perceive a dogmatic interest peculiar to the compiler, ideas entirely foreign to Jesus, and sometimes indications which put us on our guard as to the good

* Julius Africanus, in Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.*, I, 7.

faith of the narrator? How, in short, by the side of the purest, the most just, the most truly evangelical views, these spots in which we would fain see the interpolations of an ardent sectary? Is it indeed John, the son of Zebedee, the brother of James, (of whom no single mention is made in the fourth gospel), who was able to write in Greek these lessons of abstract metaphysics to which neither the synoptics nor the Talmud present any analogy? All this is weighty, and, for my part, I dare not be certain that the fourth gospel was written entirely by the pen of an ex-fisherman of Galilee. But that in substance this gospel issued towards the end of the first century, from the great school of Asia Minor, which held to John, that it presents to us a version of the Master's life, worthy of high consideration and often of preference, is demonstrated, both by external evidence and by the examination of the document itself, in a manner that leaves nothing to be desired.

And first, there is no doubt that towards the year 150 the fourth gospel was in existence and was attributed to John. Formal texts of St. Justin,* Athenagoras,† Tatian,‡ Theophilus of Antioch,‖ and Irenæus,§ show that from that time this gospel was used in all controversies, and served as the corner-stone for the development of the doctrine. Irenæus is formal; now, Irenæus is of the school of John, and between him and the apostle there was only Polycarp. The part of this gospel in gnosticism, and particularly in the system of Valentine,¶ in

* *Apol.*, I, 32, 61; *Dial. cum Tryph.*, 88. † *Legatio pro Christ.*, 10.
‡ *Adv. Græc.*, 5, 7. Cf. Eusebius, *H. E.*, IV, 29; Theodoret, *Hæretic. fabul.* I, 20.
‖ *Ad Autolycum*, II, 22. § *Adv. hær.*, II, XXII, 5; III, 1, Cf. Eus., *H. E.*, V. 8.
¶ Irenæus, *Adv. hær.*, I, III 6; III, XI, 7; St. Hippolytus, *Philosophumena*, VI, II, 29 *seqq.*

Montanism* and in the contest of the Quartodecimani,† is no less decisive. The school of John is that the course of which is most clearly seen during the second century; now, this school cannot be understood if we do not place the fourth gospel‡ at its very cradle. The first epistle also, attributed to St. John, is certainly by the same author as the fourth gospel; now the epistle is identified as John's by Polycarp,‖ Papias§ and Irenæus.¶

But above all the book itself is of an impressive character. The author speaks continually as an eye-witness; he desires to pass for the apostle John. If, therefore, this work is not really by the apostle, we must admit a deception which the author confesses to himself. Now, although the ideas of that day were, in matters of literary honesty, essentially different from ours, we have no example in the apostolic world, of a forgery of this kind. Moreover, not only does the author desire to pass for the apostle John, but we see clearly that he writes in the interest of that apostle. On every page the intention is betrayed of showing that he was the favorite of Jesus,** that upon all the most solemn occasions (at the Supper, on Calvary, at the grave) he held the first place. The relations, fraternal on the whole, though not excluding a certain rivalry, of the author with Peter,†† his hatred on the contrary to Judas,‡‡ a hatred perhaps anterior to the betrayal, seem to disclose themselves here and there.

* Irenæus, *Adv. hær.*, III, xi, 9. † Eusebius, *H. E.*, V, 24.

‡ 1 John, i, 3, 5. The two works present the most complete identity of style, the same peculiarities, the same favorite expressions.

‖ *Epist. ad Philip.*, 7. § In Eusebius, *H. E.*, III, 39.

¶ *Adv. hær.*, III, xvi, 5, 8. Cf. Eusebius, *H. E.*, V, 8.

** xiii, 23; xix, 26; xx, 2, xxi, 7, 20.

†† John xviii, 15, 16; xx, 2-6; xxi, 15-19. ‡‡ vi, 65; xii, 6; xiii, 21 seqq.

We are tempted to believe that John, in his old age, having read the evangelical narrations which were in circulation, remarked, on the one hand, various inaccuracies,* on the other hand, was wounded at seeing that there had not been accorded to him a sufficiently prominent place in the history of Christ; that then he began to dictate many things which he knew better than the rest, with the intention of showing that in a great number of cases in which mention had been made of Peter only, he had figured with and before him.† Already in the lifetime of Jesus, this slight feeling of jealousy had betrayed itself between the sons of Zebedee and the other disciples.‡ Since the death of James, his brother, John was the sole possessor of the affectionate memories of which these two disciples, by the confession of all, were the depositaries. Hence his perpetual care to keep in mind that he is the last surviving eye-witness,‖ and the pleasure that he takes in relating circumstances with which he alone could be acquainted. Hence so many little traits of precision which seem like the scholia of an annotator: "It was the sixth hour;" "it was night;" "the servant's name was Malchus;" "they had made a fire of coals, for it was cold;" "now the coat was without seam." Hence, finally, the disorder of the compilation, the irregularity of the progress, the disconnection of the first chapters; so many things inexplicable on the supposition that this gospel is only a theologi-

* The manner in which Aristion or *Presbyteros Joannes* expressed himself on the Gospel of Mark before Papias (Eusebius, *H. E.*, III, 39,) implies, indeed, a kind criticism, or rather a sort of excuse, which seems to suppose that John's disciples had some better conception of the same subject.

† Com. John, xviii, 15 seqq., with Matt. xxvi, 58; John, xx, 2-6, with Mark xvi, 7. See also John, xiii, 24, 25.

‡ See hereafter, p. 162.

‖ i, 14; xix, 35; xxi, 24 seqq. Comp. the first epistle of St. John. i, 3, 5.

cal thesis without historical value, and which, on the contrary, are perfectly comprehensible, if we see in them, according to the tradition, the memories of an old man, sometimes of marvellous freshness, sometimes having suffered strange mutations.

A capital distinction, indeed, must be made in the gospel of John. On the one hand, this gospel presents to us a picture of the life of Jesus which differs considerably from that of the synoptics. On the other, he puts into the mouth of Jesus discourses, the tone, the style, the manner, the doctrines of which have nothing in common with the *Logia* reported by the synoptics. Under this second relation the difference is so great that we must make a decided choice. If Jesus spoke as Matthew has it, he could not have spoken as John has it. Between the two authorities, no critic has hesitated, none will hesitate. A thousand miles from the simple, disinterested, impersonal tone of the synoptics, the gospel of John discovers continually the preoccupations of the apologist, the afterthoughts of the sectary, the intention of proving a thesis and of convincing adversaries.* Not by pretentious, heavy, badly-written tirades, saying little to the moral sense, did Jesus found his divine work. Even if Papias had not told us that Matthew wrote the sayings of Jesus in their original tongue, the naturalness, the ineffable truth, the peerless charm of the synoptic discourses, their thoroughly Hebraic manner, the analogies which they present to the sayings of the Jewish doctors of the same period, their perfect harmony with

* See, for example, chap. IX and XI. Notice especially the strange effect of passages like *John*, XIX, 35; XX, 31; XXI, 20–23, 24–25, when we remember the total absence of reflections which distinguishes the synoptics.

Galilean nature, all these characters, if we compare them with the obscure gnosticism and the distorted metaphysics which fill the discourses of John, speak loudly enough. This does not mean that there are not in the discourses of John wonderful flashes of light, touches which come really from Jesus.* But the mystic tone of these discourses corresponds in no wise to the character of the eloquence of Jesus such as we imagine it from the synoptics. A new spirit has come; gnosticism has already commenced; the Galilean era of the kingdom of God is ended; the hope of the speedy coming of Christ grows dim; we are entering into the aridities of metaphysics, into the darkness of abstract dogma. The spirit of Jesus is not there, and if the son of Zebedee really traced these pages, certainly he had entirely forgotten while writing them the lake of Genesareth, and the delightful conversations which he had heard upon its banks.

A circumstance, moreover, which fully proves that the discourses reported by the fourth gospel are not historic, but compositions intended to cover with the authority of Jesus, certain doctrines dear to the compiler, is their perfect harmony with the intellectual state of Asia Minor, at the time they were written. Asia Minor was then the theatre of a singular movement of syncretic philosophy; all the germs of gnosticism were already in existence. John appears to have drunk from these foreign fountains. It may be that after the crises of the year 68 (the date of the apocalypse) and the year 70 (the fall of Jerusalem), the old apostle, with his ardent and mobile soul, disabused

* For example IV, 1 seqq.; XV, 12 seqq. Many sayings recounted by John are found in the synoptics (XII, 16; XV, 20).

of the belief in the speedy appearance of the Son of man in the clouds, inclined towards the ideas which he found about him, many of which readily amalgamated with certain Christian doctrines. In attributing these new ideas to Jesus, he but followed a very natural inclination. Our memories are transformed with all the rest; the idea of a person whom we have known, changes with us.* Considering Jesus as the incarnation of truth, John could not but attribute to him what he had come to take for truth.

And now finally, we will add that probably John himself had small part in this, that this change was made around him rather than by him. We are sometimes tempted to believe that precious words, coming from the apostle, were employed by his disciples in a sense very different from the primitive evangelical spirit. Indeed, certain portions of the fourth gospel have been added afterwards; such is the twenty-first chapter entire,† in which the author seems to have intended to render homage to the apostle Peter after his death, and to reply to the objections which might be, or which had already been, drawn from the death of John himself (v. 21-23). Several other passages bear traces of erasures and corrections.‡

It is impossible, at this distance, to possess the key of all these singular problems, and doubtless, many surprises would be in reserve for us, could we penetrate into the secrets of this mysterious school of Ephesus, which more than once appears to have taken delight

* Thus Napoleon became a liberal in the memory of his companions in exile, when they, after their return, were thrown into the midst of the political society of the time.

† The verses XX, 30–31, evidently formed the ancient conclusion.

‡ VI, 2, 22; VII, 22.

in obscure paths. But a decisive test is this. Every person who sits down to write the life of Jesus without a rigid theory as to the relative value of the gospels, allowing himself to be guided entirely by the sentiment of the subject, will be led in a multitude of cases to prefer the narrative of John to that of the synoptics. The last months of the life of Jesus in particular are explained only by John; many features of the Passion, unintelligible in the synoptics,* assume in the relation of the fourth gospel, probability and possibility. On the contrary, I dare defy any person to compose a consistent life of Jesus, if he makes account of the discourses which John attributes to Jesus. This style of extolling himself and demonstrating himself incessantly, this perpetual argumentation, this scenic representation without simplicity, these long moralizings at the end of each miracle, these stiff and awkward discourses, the tone of which is so often false and unequal,† are unendurable to a man of taste by the side of the delicious sayings of the synoptics. We have here, evidently, artificial pieces,‡ which represent to us the teachings of Jesus, as the dialogues of Plato render to us the conversation of Socrates. They are in some sort the variations of a musician improvising on his own account upon a given theme. The theme may be not without some authenticity; but in the execution, the artist gives his fantasy full play. We feel the factitious procedure, the rhetoric, the gloss.‖

* For example, that which concerns the announcement of the treachery of Judas.

† See, for example, II, 25; III, 32, 33, and the long disputations of chap. VII, VIII and IX.

‡ Often we feel that the author seeks pretexts for bringing in discourses (ch III, V, VIII, XIII seqq.

‖ For example, chap. XVII.

Besides, the vocabulary of Jesus is not found in the fragments of which we are speaking. The expression "kingdom of God," which was so familiar to the master,* is seen but once.† On the other hand, the style of the discourses attributed to Jesus by the fourth gospel, presents the most complete analogy to that of the epistles of St. John; we see that in writing his discourses, the author followed, not his memories, but the rather monotonous movement of his own thought. An entire new mystic language is unfolded, a language of which the synoptics had not the least idea ("world," "truth," "life," "light," "darkness," etc.). Had Jesus ever spoken in this style, which has in it nothing Hebrew, nothing Jewish, nothing Talmudic, if I may so express myself, how could a single one of his hearers have kept the secret so well.

Literary history furnishes, moreover, another example which presents the closest analogy with the historical phenomena that we have described, and which serves to explain it. Socrates, who like Jesus, did not write, is known to us by two of his disciples, Xenophon and Plato, the first corresponding by his limpid, transparent, impersonal style, to the synoptics, the second reminding us, by his vigorous individuality, of the author of the fourth gospel. To set forth the Socratic teaching, must we follow the "Dialogues" of Plato, or the "Memorabilia" of Xenophon? There can be no doubt in regard to this; the whole world cleaves to the "Memorabilia," and not to the "Dialogues." Does Plato, however, teach us nothing in regard to Socrates? Would a careful critic, in writing

* Besides the synoptics, the Acts, the Epistle of St. Paul and the Apocalypse attest it.

† John, iii, 3, 5.

the biography of the latter, neglect the "Dialogues?" Who would dare to maintain that? The analogy, moreover, is not complete, and the difference is in favor of the fourth gospel.

The author of this gospel is, in fact, the better biographer, as if Plato, although attributing to his master fictitious discourses, knew most important things in regard to his life, of which Xenophon was entirely ignorant.

Without pronouncing upon the material question, what hand traced the fourth gospel, and even while inclining to believe that the discourses at least are not by the son of Zebedee, we admit, therefore, that this is really "the Gospel according to John," in the same sense as the first and second gospels are really the gospels "according to Matthew," and "according to Mark." The historical sketch of the fourth gospel is the life of Jesus as it was known in the school of John; it is the relation which Aristion and *Presbyteros Joannes* gave to Papias without telling him that it was written, or rather attaching no importance to that peculiarity. I will add that, in my opinion, this school was better acquainted with the external circumstances of the life of the founder than the group whose memories made up the synoptic gospels. It had, especially in regard to the sojourns of Jesus at Jerusalem, data which the others did not possess. The adherents of the school treated Mark as an indifferent biographer, and had invented a system to explain his hiatuses.* Certain passages of Luke, in which there is, as it were, an echo of the Johannic traditions,† prove, moreover,

* Papias, *loc. cit.*

† Thus the pardon of the woman taken in adultery, the acquaintanee of Luke with the family of Bethany, his type of the character of Martha answering to the

that these traditions were not entirely unknown to the rest of the Christian family.

These elucidations will be sufficient, I think, to show, in the course of the narrative, the motives which determined me to give the preference to one or another of the four guides which we have for the life of Jesus. Upon the whole, I accept the four canonical gospels as authentic. All, in my judgment, date back to the first century, and they are substantially by the authors to whom they are attributed; but in historic value they are very unequal. Matthew clearly deserves unlimited confidence as regards the discourses; he gives the *Logia*, actual notes from a clear and living memory of the teaching of Jesus. A splendor at once soft and terrible, a divine power, if I may use the term, italices these words, detaches them from the context, and renders them easily recognizable to the critic. He who attempts the task of forming a regular composition out of the gospel history, possesses in this respect an excellent touchstone. The real words of Jesus will not be concealed; as soon as we touch them in this chaos of traditions of unequal value, we feel them vibrate; they come spontaneously, and take their own place in the narration, where they stand out in unparalleled relief.

The narrative portions grouped in the first gospel about this primitive knot, have not the same authority. There are in them many legends of a rather flaccid contour, sprung from the piety of the second Christian

διηκόνει of John (XII, 2), the incident of the woman who wiped the feet of Jesus with her hair, a dim notion of the journeys of Jesus to Jerusalem, the idea that he appeared at the Passion before three authorities, the opinion of the author that some of the disciples witnessed the crucifixion, his acquaintance with the action of Annas by the side of Caiaphas, the appearance of the angel in the agony (comp. John, XII, 28-29).

generation.* The gospel of Mark is much more firm, more precise, less cumbered with fables of later insertion. Of the three synoptics, this has come to us the oldest, the most original, that to which fewest subsequent elements have been added. The material details in Mark have a precision which we seek in vain in the other evangelists. He is fond of reporting certain words of Jesus in Syro-chaldaic.† He is full of minute observations coming without any doubt from an eye-witness. Nothing opposes the idea that this eye-witness, who evidently had followed Jesus, who had loved him and known him intimately, and who had a living remembrance of him, was the apostle Peter himself, as Papias says.

As to the work of Luke, its historic value is clearly less. It is a document of second-hand. The narration is riper. The sayings of Jesus are more premeditated, more composite. Some teachings are carried to excess and falsified.‡ Writing out of Palestine, and certainly after the siege of Jerusalem,§ the author indicates places with less precision than the two other synoptics; he has a wrong idea of the temple which he imagines to be an oratory, whither men went to perform their devotions;‖ he softens details endeavoring to reconcile different accounts;¶ he tones down passages which had become embarrassing from the standpoint of a more exalted idea of the divinity of Jesus;** he exaggerates the marvellous;†† commits errors of chronology;‡‡

* Ch. I and II especially. See also XXVII, 3 seqq.; 19, 60, in comparison with Mark.

† V, 41; VII, 34; XV, 34. Matthew presents this peculiarity but once (XXVII, 46).

‡ XIV, 26. The rules of the apostolate (ch. X) have an especial character of exaltation.

§ XIX, 41, 43-44; XXI, 9, 20; XXIII, 29.

‖ II, 37; XVIII, 10 seqq., XXIV, 53.

¶ For example, IV, 16

** III, 23. He omits Matt., XXIX, 36.

†† IV, 14; XXII, 43, 44.

‡‡ For example, in what concerns Quirinius, Lysanias, and Theudas.

he ignores Hebrew entirely ;* quotes no word of Jesus in that language, and calls all localities by their Greek names. We feel the compiler, the man who has not seen the witnesses himself, but who works upon texts, and allows himself to do great violence to them in order to reconcile them. Luke probably had before him he biographical collection of Mark and the *Logia* of Matthew. But he takes great liberties with them; sometimes he fuses two anecdotes or two parables into one ;† sometimes he decomposes one into two.‡ He interprets documents according to his personal understanding; he has not the absolute impassibility of Matthew and Mark. We are able to say certain things in regard to his tastes and his peculiar tendencies: he is a very precise devotee ;‖ he makes it important that Jesus performed all the Jewish rites ;§ he is an exalted democrat and Ebionite, that is, thoroughly opposed to property, and persuaded that the day of the poor is at hand ;¶ he is especially fond of all the anecdotes which place in relief the conversion of sinners, the exaltation of the humble ;** he often modifies the old traditions to give them this turn.†† He admits into his first pages legends in regard to the infancy of Jesus, told with these long amplifications, those canticles, those conventional methods which form the essential character of the apocryphal gospels. Finally, there are in the account of the last days of Jesus some cir-

* Comp. Luke i, 31, with Matt., i, 21.

† For example, xix, 12-27.

‡ Thus, the supper at Bethany furnishes him with two stories (vii, 36–48, and x, 38–42.

‖ xxiii, 56.

§ ii, 21, 22, 39, 41, 42. It is an Ebionite peculiarity. Cf. *Philosophumena*, VII, vi, 34.

¶ The parable of Dives and Lazarus. Comp vi, 20 seqq.; 24 seqq.; xii, 13 seqq. xvi entire; xxii, 35. Comp. *Acts*, ii, 44 45; v, 1 seqq.

** The woman who anointed his feet, Zaccheus, the good thief, the parable of the Pharisee and the publican, the prodigal son.

†† For example, Mary of Bethany becomes to him a repentant courtezan.

cumstances full of tender feeling and certain words of Jesus of a delicious beauty,* which are not found in the more authentic narratives, and in which we perceive the work of legend. Luke probably borrowed them from a more recent collection, the main object of which was to excite religious feeling.

Great reserve has of course been necessary in regard to a document of this kind. It would have been as uncritical to neglect it as to employ it without discrimination. Luke had before him originals which we have not. He is less an evangelist than a biographer of Jesus, a "harmonist," after the manner of Marcion and Tatian. But he is a biographer of the first century, a divine artist who, independently of the materials which he derived from more ancient sources, pictures to us the character of the founder, with a happiness in feature, and an inspiration in the whole, a relief which the other two synoptics have not. His gospel has the greatest charm for the reader, for to the incomparable beauty of the common ground, he adds a portion of art and composition which singularly increases the effect of the portrait, without seriously injuring its truth.

Upon the whole, we may say that the synoptic compilation has passed through three stages: first, the original documentary state (Matthew's λόγια, Mark's λεχθέντα ἢ πραχθέντα), first collections which no longer exist; second, the state of simple mixture, in which the original documents are amalgamated with no effort at composition, without disclosing any personal view

* Jesus weeping over Jerusalem, the bloody sweat, the meeting of the holy women, the good thief, etc. The saying to the women of Jerusalem (XXIII, 28 29) could hardly have been originated until after the siege in the year 70.

on the part of the authors (the present gospels of Matthew and Mark); third, the state of combination or of intended and premeditated digestion, in which we perceive the effort to reconcile the different versions (Luke's gospel). The gospel of John, as we have said, is a composition of a different order, and entirely peculiar.

It will be remarked that I have made no use of the apocryphal gospels. These compositions can in no wise be put upon the same footing as the canonical gospels. They are flat and puerile amplifications, based upon the canonical gospels, and adding to them nothing of value. On the contrary, I have been very careful to collect the fragments preserved by the Fathers of the Church of ancient gospels which once existed along with the canonical and which are now lost, such as the Gospel according to the Hebrews, the Gospel according to the Egyptians, and the Gospels called those of Justin, Marcion and Tatian. The two first are especially important in that they were written in Aramæan like the *Logia* of Matthew, that they appear to constitute a variety of the gospel of that apostle, and that they were the gospel of the Ebionim, that is, of those little Christian communities of Batanea who kept up the use of the Syro-chaldaic, and who appear in some respects to have continued the line of Jesus. But it must be confessed, that in the state in which they have reached us, these gospels are inferior, for critical authority, to the form of Matthew's gospel which we possess.

The historic value which I attribute to the gospels is now, I think, quite understood. They are neither biographies, after the manner of Suetonius, nor ficti-

tious legends like those of Philostratus; they are legendary biographies. I would compare them with the legends of the Saints, the Lives of Plotinus, Proclus, Isidorus, and other works of the same kind, in which historic truth and the intention of presenting models of virtue are combined in different degrees. Inaccuracy, which is one of the peculiarities of all popular compositions, is especially perceptible in them. Suppose that ten or twelve years ago, three or four old soldiers of the empire had each sat down to write the life of Napoleon from memory. It is clear that their relations would present numerous errors and great discrepancies. One of them would put Wagram before Marengo; another would write without hesitation that Napoleon drove the government of Robespierre from the Tuileries; a third would omit expeditions of the highest importance. But one thing would certainly be realized with a good degree of truth from these artless relations,—the character of the hero, the impression which he made upon those about him. In this view, such popular histories are better than formal, authoritative history. The same thing may be said of the gospels. Intent solely on setting prominently forth the excellence of the Master, his miracles and his teachings, the evangelists exhibit complete indifference to everything which is not the very spirit of Jesus. Contradictions as to times, places, persons were regarded as insignificant; for, the higher the degree of inspiration attributed to the words of Jesus, the farther they were from according this inspiration to the narrators. These were looked upon simply as scribes, and had but one rule: to omit nothing that they knew.*

* See the passage of Papias hitherto cited.

It cannot be contradicted that to some extent pre conceived ideas must have mingled with these memories. Several stories, of Luke especially, were devised in order to bring out vividly certain traits of the physiognomy of Jesus. This physiognomy itself suffered changes every day. Jesus would be a phenomenon unique in history, if, with the part which he enacted, he had not been early transfigured. The legend of Alexander was complete before the generation of his companions in arms was extinct; that of St. Francis d'Assisi commenced while he was yet alive. A rapid work of metamorphosis was going on also, during the twenty or thirty years which followed the death of Jesus, and imposed upon his biography the absolute traits of an ideal legend. Death adds perfection to the most perfect man; it renders him faultless to those who have loved him. At the same time, moreover, that they wished to paint the Master, they wished to demonstrate him. Many anecdotes were conceived to prove that in him the prophecies considered as Messianic had been accomplished. But this process, the importance of which must not be denied, cannot explain all. No Jewish work of the time gives a series of prophecies precisely set forth which the Messiah was to accomplish. Many of the Messianic allusions seized upon by the evangelists are so subtle, so distorted, that we can believe only that all that corresponds to a doctrine generally admitted. Sometimes the reasoning was thus: "The Messiah was to do a certain thing: now Jesus is the Messiah; therefore Jesus has done a certain thing." Sometimes it was the converse: "A certain thing happened to Jesus; now Jesus is the Messiah; therefore a certain thing was to

happen to the Messiah.* Too simple explanations are always false in an analysis of the tissue of these profound creations of popular sentiment, which defy all systems by their richness and their infinite variety.

It is hardly necessary to say that with such documents, in order to give only what is incontestable, we must limit ourselves to general lines. In nearly all ancient histories, even in those which are much less legendary than these, the details leave room for infinite doubt. When we have two accounts of the same act, it is extremely rare that the two accounts agree. Is not this a reason, when we have but one, for imagining many perplexities? We may say that among the anecdotes, the speeches, the celebrated sayings reported by the historians, not one is rigorously authentic. Were there stenographers to fix these fleeting words? Was there an annalist always present to note the gestures, the manner, the feelings of the actor? Endeavor to arrive at the truth in regard to the manner in which this or that cotemporaneous event happened; you will not succeed. Two accounts of the same occurrence given by eye-witnesses differ essentially. Must we therefore renounce all the coloring of narratives, and confine ourselves to the general enunciation of facts? This would be to suppress history. Indeed, I do believe that, if we except certain short, almost mnemonic axioms, none of the discourses reported by Matthew are literal; our stenographed trials scarcely are. I willingly admit that this admirable relation of the Passion contains a multitude of approximations. Should we, however, write the life of Jesus, omitting these teachings which represent to

* See, for example, John, xix, 23, 24.

us so vividly the physiognomy of his discourses, and confine ourselves to saying with Josephus and Tacitus "that he was put to death by the order of Pilate at the instigation of the priests?" That would be, in my opinion, a species of inaccuracy worse than that to which we are exposed by admitting the details which the texts furnish us. These details are not true to the letter; but they are true with a superior truth; they are truer than the naked truth, in this sense, that they are truth rendered expressive and eloquent, raised to the hight of an idea.

I beg those persons who may think I have accorded too great confidence to stories in great part legendary, to remember the observation which I have just made. To what would the life of Alexander be reduced, were we to confine ourselves to that which is absolutely certain? Even the traditions that are in part erroneous, contain a portion of truth which history cannot neglect. M. Sprenger has not been blamed for making, in writing the life of Mahomet, great account of the *hadith* or oral traditions in regard to the prophet, or for often attributing literally to his hero sayings known only from this source. The traditions in regard to Mahomet, however, have no historical character superior to that of the discourses and narratives which compose the gospels. They were written between the year 50 and 140 of the hegira. In writing the history of the Jewish schools during the centuries which immediately preceded and followed the birth of christianity, we should have no scruples about attributing to Hillel, Schammaï and Gamaliel the maxims which are assigned to them by the *Mischna* and the *Gemara*.

although these great compilations were put into form several hundred years after the doctors in question.

As to those who believe, on the contrary, that history should be written by reproducing without interpretation the documents that have come down to us, I beg them to observe that in such a subject that is not permissible. The four principal documents are in flagrant contradiction one with another; Josephus, moreover, sometimes corrects them. We must make a choice. To assert that an event could not have happened in two ways at once, nor in an impossible way, is not to impose upon history an *a priori* philosophy. When we possess several different versions of a single act, when credulity has mingled fabulous circumstances with all these versions, the historian should not conclude that the act is unreal; but he should in such cases be upon his guard, compare the texts and proceed by induction. There is in particular one class of relations to which this principle must necessarily be applied,—supernatural relations. To seek to explain these relations or to reduce them to legends, is not to mutilate the facts in the name of theory; it is to base ourselves upon the observation of facts. None of the miracles with which ancient histories are filled, occurred under scientific conditions. Observation never once contradicted, teaches us that miracles occur only in periods and countries in which they are believed in and before persons disposed to believe in them. No miracle was ever performed before an assembly of men capable of establishing the miraculous character of an act. Neither men of the people nor men of the world are competent for that. Great precautions and a long habit of scientific research are requisite. In our days

have we not seen nearly all men the dupes of gross prestiges or puerile illusions? Marvellous acts attested by every inhabitant of small towns have become, under a more severe scrutiny, acts of felony.* If it is certain that no cotemporaneous miracle bears examination, is it not probable that the miracles of the past, all of which were performed in popular assemblages, would also present to us, were it possible for us to criticise them in detail, their share of illusion?

It is not therefore in the name of this or that philosophy, but in the name of constant experience, that we banish miracle from history. We do not say "Miracle is impossible;" we say: "there has been hither to no miracle proved." Let a thaumaturgist present himself to-morrow with testimony sufficiently important to merit our attention; let him announce that he is able, I will suppose, to raise the dead; what would be done? A commission composed of physiologists, physicians, chemists, persons experienced in historical criticism, would be appointed. This commission would choose the corpse, make certain that death was real, designate the hall in which the experiment should be made, and regulate the whole system of precautions necessary to leave no room for doubt. If, under such conditions, the resurrection should be performed, a probability almost equal to certainty would be attained. However, as an experiment ought always to be capable of being repeated, as one ought to be capable of doing again what one has done once, and as in the matter of miracles there can be no question of easy or difficult, the thaumaturgist would be invited to reproduce his marvellous act under other circumstances,

* See the *Gazette des Tribunaux*, 10 sept. et 11 nov. 1851. 28 mai 1857.

upon other bodies, in another medium. If the miracle succeeds each time, two things would be proven: first, that supernatural acts do come to pass in the world; second, that the power to perform them belongs or is delegated to certain persons. But who does not see that no miracle was ever performed under such conditions; that always hitherto the thaumaturgist has chosen the subject of the experiment, chosen the means, chosen the public; that, moreover, it is, in most cases, the people themselves who from the undeniable need which they feel of seeing in great events and great men something divine, create the marvellous legends afterwards. Till we have new light, we shall maintain, therefore, this principle of historical criticism, that a supernatural relation cannot be accepted as such, that it always implies credulity or imposture, that the duty of the historian is to interpret it, and to seek what portion of truth and what portion of error it may contain.

Such are the rules which have been followed in the composition of this life. To the reading of the texts I have been able to add a fresh source of light, an examination of the places in which the events occurred. The scientific commission for the exploration of ancient Phœnicia, of which I was the director in 1860 and 1861,* led me to reside on the frontiers of Galilee and to traverse it frequently. I have travelled through the evangelical province in every direction; I have visited Jerusalem, Hebron, and Samaria; scarcely any locality important in the history of Jesus has escaped me. All this history which, at a distance, seems floating in the clouds of an unreal world, thus assumed a

* The book containing the results of this mission is in press.

body, a solidity which astonished me. The striking accord of the texts and the places, the wonderful harmony of the evangelical ideal with the landscape which served as its setting, were to me as a revelation. I had before my eyes a fifth gospel, torn but still legible, and thenceforth, through the narratives of Matthew and Mark, instead of an abstract being, which one would say had never existed, I saw a wonderful human form live and move. During the summer, having been compelled to go up to Ghazir in Mount Lebanon to take a little rest, I fixed with rapid strokes the image which had appeared to me, and the result was this book. When a cruel fate intervened to hasten my departure, I had but few pages left to write. The book has been, in this way, composed entirely near the very place where Jesus was born and developed. Since my return, I have labored incessantly to verify and to test in detail the sketch which I had written in haste in a Maronite hut with five or six volumes about me.

Many will, perhaps, regret the biographical form which has thus been given to my work. When I for the first time conceived a history of Christianity, what I wished to write was in fact a history of doctrines, in which men would have had scarcely any part. Jesus would hardly have been named; I should have endeavored, above all, to show how the ideas which were reproduced under his name, germinated and spread over the world. But I have learned since, that history is not a mere play of abstractions, that in it men are more than doctrines. It was not a certain theory in regard to justification and redemption which produced the Reformation; it was Luther, it was Calvin. Par-

seeism, Hellenism, Judaïsm, might have combined in all forms; the doctrines of the resurrection and the Word might have been developed for centuries without producing this fecund, unique, sublime fact, which is called Christianity. This fact is the work of Jesus, of St. Paul, of St. John. To write the history of Jesus, St. Paul and St. John, is to write the history of the origins of Christianity. The previous movements belong to our subject only in so far as they serve to throw light upon these extraordinary men, who must of course have had some relation with what preceded them. In such an effort to revivify the lofty souls of the past, we must be permitted to some extent to divine and conjecture. A great life is an organic whole which cannot be represented by the simple agglomeration of little facts. A deep feeling must embrace the whole and form its unity. The method of art in such a subject is a good guide; the exquisite tact of a Goethe would here find full scope. The essential conditions of art creations is to form a living system every portion of which answers and demands every other. In histories of this kind the great sign that we have attained the truth, is success in combining the texts so as to constitute a logical, probable, concordant narrative. The intimate laws of life, of the advance of organic products, and of the toning down of shades, must be consulted at every step; for what we have here to find, is not the material circumstance, impossible to verify, but the very soul of the history; what we have to seek is not the petty certainty of the minutiæ, but the justness of the general idea, the truth of the coloring. Each touch which violates the rules of classic narration, should warn us to beware; for the

fact which we have to narrate was living, natural and harmonious. If we do not succeed in rendering it such in our narration, surely it is because we have not attained to the right view of it. Suppose that in restoring the Minerva of Phidias according to the texts, an unnatural, maimed, artificial whole should be produced; what must we conclude therefrom? But one thing: that the texts demand artistic interpretation, that they must be gently entreated until they finally combine to produce a whole in which all the materials are happily fused. Should we be sure of having then, feature for feature, the Greek statue? No; but at least we would not have a caricature; we would have the general spirit of the work, one of the forms in which it might have existed.

This idea of a living organism we have not hesitated to take as a guide in the general structure of the narrative. The reading of the gospels is enough to show that their authors, though they had in their minds a very just plan of the life of Jesus, were not guided by very rigorous chronological data; Papias, moreover, tells us so expressly.* The expressions: "In those days —— after that —— then —— and it came to pass that ——," etc., are simple transitions designed to connect the different stories. To leave all the materials furnished us by the Evangelists in the disorder in which tradition gives them, would no more be to write the history of Jesus, than one would write the history of a celebrated man by giving promiscuously the letters and anecdotes of his youth, his old age, and his prime. The Koran, which also presents to us in the most complete confusion the fragments of the dif-

* *Loc. cit.*

ferent periods of the life of Mahomet, has yielded its secret to an ingenious criticism; the chronological order in which these fragments were composed, has been discovered with approximate certainty. Such a readjustment is much more difficult for the gospel, the public life of Jesus having been shorter and less crowded with events than the life of the founder of Islam. However, the attempt to find a clue by which to guide our steps in this labyrinth, cannot be taxed with gratuitous subtlety. It is no great abuse of hypotheses to suppose that a religious founder begins by adopting the moral aphorisms which are already in circulation in his time, and the practices which are most prevalent; that, when more mature, and in possession of his full powers, he takes pleasure in a species of calm, poetic eloquence, far removed from all controversy, suave and free as pure sentiment; that he gradually becomes exalted, excited by opposition, and ends in polemics and strong invective. Such are the periods which have been distinguished in the Koran. The order adopted with an exquisite tact by the synoptics, supposes an analogous progress. Read Matthew attentively, and there will be found in the distribution of the discourses, a gradation strongly analogous to that which we have just indicated. There will be observed, moreover, the difference in forms of expression of which we make use when we attempt to explain the progress of the ideas of Jesus. The reader may, if he prefers, see in the divisions adopted in this regard, only the sections indispensable to the methodical exposition of a profound and complex mind.

If the love of a subject may assist in its comprehension, it will also be recognized, I hope, that this condi-

tion has not been wanting. To write the history of a religion, it is necessary, first, to have believed it (without that, we could not understand by what it has charmed and satisfied the human conscience); in the second place, to believe it no longer implicitly; for implicit faith is incompatible with sincere history. But loves goes without faith. Because we do not attach ourselves to any of the forms which captivate human adoration, we do not renounce the enjoyment of all that is good and beautiful in them. No passing vision exhausts divinity; God was revealed before Jesus, God will be revealed after him. Widely unequal and so much the more divine, as they are the greater and the more spontaneous, the manifestations of the God concealed in the depths of the human conscience, are all of the same order. Jesus cannot therefore, belong exclusively to those who call themselves his disciples. He is the common honor of all who bear a human heart. His glory consists, not in being banished from history; we render him a truer worship by showing that all history is incomprehensible without him.

LIFE OF JESUS.

CHAPTER I.

PLACE OF JESUS IN THE WORLD'S HISTORY.

The capital event of the history of the world is the revolution by which the noblest portions of humanity passed from the ancient religions, comprised under the vague name of paganism, to a religion founded upon the divine unity, the trinity, the incarnation of the Son of God. This conversion required nearly a thousand years for its accomplishment. The new religion occupied at least three hundred years in its formation alone. But the origin of the revolution with which we have to do, is an event which occurred during the reigns of Augustus and Tiberius. Then lived a superior person who by his bold initiative, and by the love which he inspired, created the object and fixed the starting-point of the future faith of humanity.

Man, when first he distinguished himself from the animal, was religious, that is to say he saw, in nature, something beyond reality, and, for himself, something beyond death. This feeling, for thousands of years,

wandered about in the strangest way. With many races, it never went beyond a belief in sorcerers in the crude form in which we still find it in certain parts of Oceanica. With some, the religious sentiment culminated in the shameful scenes of butchery which characterize the ancient religion of Mexico. With others, especially in Africa, it reached pure fetishism, that is the adoration of a material object, to which were attributed supernatural powers. As the instinct of love, which at times raises the commonest man above himself, sometimes changes into brutality and ferocity, so this divine faculty of religion long seemed a cancer which must be extirpated from the human race, a cause of errors and of crimes which the wise must endeavor to suppress.

The brilliant civilizations which were developed in a very remote antiquity by China, by Babylonia and Egypt, caused religion to take certain steps in advance. China attained at a very early date a species of sensible mediocrity, which forbade any great disorders. It knew neither the advantages nor the abuses of the genius of religion. At all events, it had in this respect no influence over the direction of the great current of humanity. The religions of Babylonia and Syria never extricated themselves from a basis of amazing sensuality; these religions continued, until their extinction in the fourth and fifth centuries of our era, schools of immorality, in which were sometimes opened, by a sort of poetic intuition, penetrating vistas of the divine world. Egypt, beneath a species of apparent fetishism, had at an early day metaphysical dogmas and a lofty symbolism. But undoubtedly these interpretations of a refined theology were not

primitive. Never has man, in possession of a clear idea, amused himself by clothing it in symbols; generally it is after long reflection, and because it is impossible for the human mind to resign itself to the absurd, that ideas are sought beneath the old mystic images, the meaning of which has been lost. It is not from Egypt, moreover, that the faith of humanity has come. The elements which, in the religion of a Christian, come, through a thousand transformations, from Egypt and Syria, are external forms without much consequence, or scoria such as the most refined worships always retain. The great faults of the religions of which we are speaking, was their essentially superstitious character; what they scattered over the world was millions of amulets and abracadabras. No grand moral thought could originate among races debased by centuries of despotism, and accustomed to institutions which prohibited almost every exercise of individual liberty.

The poetry of the soul, faith, liberty, honor, devotion, appeared in the world with the two great races which, in one sense, have formed humanity, I mean the Indo-European race and the Semitic race. The first intuitions of the Indo-European race were essentially naturalistic. But it was a deep, moral naturalism, a loving embrace of nature by man, a delicious poetry, full of the feeling of the infinite, the principle in short of all that German and Celtic genius, of what a Shakespeare, of what a Goethe was afterwards to express. It was neither premeditated religion nor morality; it was melancholy, tenderness, imagination; it was above all entirely serious, the essential condition of morality and religion. The faith of humanity, how-

ever, could not come from it, because these old worships had great difficulty in detaching themselves from polytheism, and did not attain to a very clear symbol. Brahminism has lived to our days only by the astonishing privilege of conservation which India seems to possess. Buddhism failed in all its attempts towards the west. Druidism remained a form exclusively national and without universal range. The Greek attempts at reform, Orphism, the Mysteries, did not suffice to give solid aliment to souls. Persia alone succeeded in forming a dogmatic religion, almost monotheistic, and wisely organized; but it is very possible that even this organization was imitated or borrowed. At all events, Persia did not convert the world; she was converted, on the contrary, when she saw rising upon her frontiers the banner of divine unity proclaimed by Islam.

To the Semitic* race belongs the glory of having produced the religion of humanity. Far beyond the confines of history, under his tent, remaining pure from the disorders of a world already corrupt, the Bedouin patriarch prepared the faith of the world. Strong antipathy to the voluptuous worships of Syria, great symplicity of ritual, complete absence of temples, the idol reduced to insignificant *theraphim*, such was his superiority. Among all the nomadic tribes of the Semites, that of the Beni-Israël was already marked for immense destinies. Ancient relations with Egypt whence resulted perhaps some appropriations purely material, had only increased their repugnance to idol-

* This word simply designates here those nations which speak or have spoken one of the languages called Semitic. Such a designation is very defective; but it is one of those words like "Gothic architecture" and "Arabic numerals" which we must preserve in order to be understood, even after the error which they imply has been demonstrated.

atry. A "Law" or *Thora*, written at a very remote period, upon metallic tables, and which they referred to their great liberator Moses, was already the code of monotheism, and contained, compared with the institutions of Egypt and Chaldea, mighty germs of social equality and of morality. A chest, or portable ark, with rings on the sides through which to pass staves, constituted their entire religious materiel; in it were collected the sacred objects of the nation, its relics, its memories, the "book" in fact,* the journal of the tribe always open, but in which they wrote with great discretion. The family entrusted with bearing the staves and watching over these portable archives, being near the book and controlling it, very soon became important. Thence, however, did not come the institution which decided the future; the Hebrew priest does not differ much from other priests of antiquity. The characteristic which distinguishes Israel essentially among theocratic nations, is that its priests were always subordinate to individual inspiration. Besides its priests, each nomadic tribe had its *nabi* or prophet, a species of living oracle which was consulted for the solution of obscure questions requiring a high degree of clairvoyance. The nabis of Israel, organized in groups or schools, had great ascendancy. Defenders of the ancient democratic spirit, enemies of the rich, opposed to all political organizations, and to whatever would lead Israel into the ways of other nations, they were the real instruments of the religious pre-eminence of the Jewish people. They early announced unbounded hopes, and when the nation, the victim in part of their impolitic counsels, had been crushed by

* 1 Sam., x, 25.

the Assyrian power, they proclaimed that an unlimited kingdom was in reserve for them, that one day Jerusalem would be the capital of the whole world, and that the human race would become Jewish. Jerusalem and its temple appeared to them like a city placed upon the summit of a mountain, towards which all nations must flow, like an oracle whence the law of the universe must emanate, like the center of an ideal realm, in which the human race, made peaceful by Israel, should taste again the joys of Eden.*

Unknown accents already made themselves heard in exaltation of the martyr, and in celebration of the power of the "man of sorrows." Concerning one of those sublime sufferers, who like Jeremiah, reddened with their blood the streets of Jerusalem, an inspired one wrote a canticle on the sufferings and the triumph of the "Servant of the Most High," in which all the prophetic power of the genius of Israel seems concentrated.† "He shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray;

* Isaiah, II, 1–4, and especially ch. XL seqq., LX seqq.; Micah IV, 1 seqq. It must be remembered that the second portion of the book of Isaiah, from ch. XL, is not by Isaiah.

† Isa., LII, 13 seqq., and LIII entire.

we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief; when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand."

Great changes were at the same time going on in the *Thora*. New texts, professing to present the true law of Moses, like Deuteronomy, were produced, and inaugurated in reality a spirit very different from that of the old nomads. An intense fanaticism was the dominant trait of this spirit. Insane believers incessantly provoked assaults upon every one who strayed from the worship of Jehovah; a code of blood, decreeing the penalty of death for religious crimes, was successfully established. Piety almost always leads to strange contradictions of vehemence and gentleness. This zeal, unknown to the crude simplicity of the time of the Judges, inspires tones of moving exhortation and of tender unction, which the world had never heard till then. A strong tendency towards social questions began already to be felt; utopias, dreams of perfect society found place in the code. A mixture of

patriarchal morality and ardent devotion, of primitive intuitions and pious refinements like those which filled the soul of a Hezekiah, a Josiah and a Jeremiah, the Pentateuch was thus fixed in the form in which we see it, and became for centuries the absolute rule of the national mind.

This great book once created, the history of the Jewish people developed itself in an irresistible tide. The great empires which succeeded one another in Western Asia, by destroying all its hope of a terrestrial kingdom, threw it back upon religious dreams with a kind of gloomy passion. Little caring for national dynasty or political independence, it accepts all governments which leave it free to perform its worship and to follow its usages. Israel henceforth shall have no other leadership than its religious enthusiasts, no other enemies than those of the divine unity, no other country than its Law.

And this Law, it is important to remark, was wholly social and moral. It was the work of men imbued with a lofty ideal of the present life, and believing that they had found the best means of realizing it. The universal conviction is that the *Thora*, well observed, cannot fail to give perfect happiness. This *Thora* has nothing in common with the Greek or Roman "Laws," which, taking small note of anything save abstract right, enter little into questions of happiness and of private morality. We perceive in advance tha the results which are to flow from it will be of the social order and not of the political order, that the work upon which this people is at labor, is a kingdom of God, not a civil republic, a universal institution, not a nationality or a country.

Through many faintings by the way, Israel maintained this vocation admirably. A succession of pious men, Esdras, Nehemiah, Onias, the Maccabees, eaten up with the zeal of the Law, upheld the defence of the ancient institutions. The idea that Israel is a nation of saints, a tribe chosen of God, and bound to him by a covenant, roots itself more and more immovably. An immense expectation fills every soul. All Indo-European antiquity had placed Paradise at the beginning; all its poets had wept a golden age departed. Israel placed the golden age in the future. The eternal poetry of religious souls, the Psalms, were born of this exalted pietism, with their divine and melancholy harmony. Israel became truly and pre-eminently the people of God, while about it the pagan religions became more and more degraded, in Persia and Babylonia to an official charlatanry, in Egypt and Syria to a crude idolatry, in the Greek and Latin world to parades. What the Christian martyrs did in the first centuries of our era, what the victims of persecuting orthodoxy did in the very bosom of Christianity up to our time, the Jews did during the two centuries which preceded the Christian era. They were a living protest against superstition and religious materialism. An extraordinary movement of ideas, ending in the most opposite results, made them at this period the most striking and the most original nation in the world. Their dispersion along the whole shore of the Mediterranean, and the use of the Greek language, which they adopted out of Palestine, prepared the way for a propaganda of which the ancient forms of society, cut up into small nationalities, had yet afforded no example.

To the time of the Maccabees, Judaism, notwithstand

ing its persistence in announcing that it would one day be the religion of the human race, had had the character of all the other worships of antiquity: it was a family worship, a tribe worship. The Israelite really thought that his worship was the best, and spoke with contempt of foreign gods. But he believed also that the religion of the true God was made for him alone. The worship of Jehovah was embraced on entering the Jewish family;* that was all. No Israelite dreamed of converting other nations to a worship which was the patrimony of the sons of Abraham. The development of the pietist spirit, after Esdras and Nehemiah, led to a conception much more solid and more logical. Judaism became the true religion absolutely; the right to embrace it was accorded to all who desired;† soon it became a pious work to make as many converts as possible.‡ Undoubtedly the delicate feeling which raised John the Baptist, Jesus, and St. Paul above the mean ideas of race, did not yet exist; by a singular contradiction, these converts (proselytes) found small consideration, and were treated with disdain.‖ But the idea of an exclusive religion, the idea that there is something in the world superior to country, to blood, to laws, the idea which shall make the apostles and the martyrs, was founded. A deep pity for pagans, however splendid might be their mundane fortune, is henceforth the feeling of every Jew.§ By a cycle of legends, intended to furnish models of immovable firmness (Daniel and his companions, the mother

* Ruth, I, 16.

† Esther, IX, 27.

‡ Matt., XXIII, 15; Josephus, *Vita*, 23; *B. J.*, II, XVII, 10; VII, III, 3; *Ant.*, XX, II, 4; Horat., *Sat.* I, IV, 143; Juv., XIV, 96 seqq.; Tacitus, *Ann.*, II, 85; *Hist.*, V, 5; Dio Cassius, XXXVII, 17.

‖ Mischna, *Schebiit*, X. 9; Talmud of Babylon, *Niddah*, fol. 13 *b*, *Jebamoth*, 47 b *Kiddushin*, 70 *b*; Midrasch. *Jalkut Ruth*, fol. 163 *d*.

§ Apocryphal letter of Baruch, in Fabricius, *Cod. pseud V. T.* II, 147 seqq.

of the Maccabees and her seven sons,* the romance of the hippodrome of Alexandria),† the guides of the people sought above all to inculcate this idea that virtue consists in a fanatical attachment to determinate religious institutions.

The persecutions of Antiochus Epiphanes made this idea a passion, almost a frenzy. It was something closely analogous to this which took place under Nero, two hundred and thirty years afterwards. Rage and despair threw the faithful into the world of visions and of dreams, the first apocalypse, the "Book of Daniel," appeared. It was a sort of reproduction of prophetism, but under a very different form from the ancient, and with a much broader idea of the destinies of the world. The Book of Daniel gave in some sort their final expression to the Messianic expectations. The Messiah was no longer a king after the manner of David and Solomon, a theocratic and Mosaic Cyrus; he was a "son of man" coming with the clouds of heaven,‡ a supernatural being, clothed in human appearance, commissioned to judge the world and to preside over the golden age. Perhaps the *Sosiosch* of Persia, the great prophet to come, commissioned to prepare the reign of Ormuzd, furnished some features to this new ideal.‖ The unknown author of the Book of Daniel had, at all events, a decisive influence upon the religious event which was to transform the world. He furnished the scenic representation, and the technical

* II Maccabees, VII, and the *De Maccabæis*, attributed to Josephus. Cf. Epistle to the Hebrews, XI, 33 seqq.

† III Maccabees (apocr.); Rufin. Suppl. ad Jos., *Contra Apionem*, II, 5.

‡ VII, 13 seqq.

‖ *Vendidad*, XIX, 18, 19; *Minokhired*, a passage published in the *Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenlandischen Gesellschaft*, I, 263; *Boundehesch*, XXXI The lack of any certain chronology of the Zend and Pehlvic texts leaves much doubt floating over these comparisons between Jewish and Persian beliefs.

terms of the new Messianism, and to him may be applied what Jesus said of John the Baptist: The prophets were until John; since that time the kingdom of God.

We must not believe, however, that this movement, so profoundly religious and passionate, had for its moving spring particular dogmas, as has been the case in all the contests which have broken out in the bosom of Christianity. The Jew of this period was as little a theologian as possible. He did not speculate on the essence of the divinity; the beliefs in regard to angels, the end of man, the divine personalities, the first germ of which already began to show itself, were optional beliefs, meditations to which every one might yield himself according to the cast of his mind, but of which a multitude of people had never heard. Indeed the most orthodox remained strangers to these peculiar notions, and held to the simplicity of Mosaism. No dogmatic power analogous to that which orthodox Christianity conferred upon the church, then existed. Not until the third century, when Christianity fell into the hands of arguing races, insane for dialectics and metaphysics, did this fever of distinctions commence, which makes the history of the Church the history of an endless controversy. There was disputation also among the Jews; zealous schools found contradictory solutions for nearly all agitated questions; but in these contentions, the principal details of which the Talmud has preserved, there is not a word of speculative theology. To keep and maintain the law, because the law is just, and because when well kept, it gives happiness, this was the whole of Judaism. No *credo*, no theoretic symbol. A disciple of the boldest Arabic

philosophy, Moses Maimonides, could become the oracle of the synagogue, because he was a most rigid observer of the law.

The reigns of the last Asmoneans and that of Herod saw the exaltation increase still more. They were filled with an uninterrupted series of religious movements. In proportion as the government became secularized and passed into unbelieving hands, the Jewish people lived less and less for earth and became more and more absorbed by the strange work which was being effected among them. The world, diverted by other spectacles, has no knowledge of what is passing in this forgotten corner of the East. Souls which keep pace with their century are, however, better informed. The delicate and clairvoyant Virgil seems to respond, as by a secret echo, to the second Isaiah; the birth of a child throws him into dreams of universal regeneration.* These dreams were common and formed a style of literature, which was covered by the name of the Sibyls. The quite recent formation of the Empire exalted the imagination; the grand era of peace upon which the world was entering, and that impress of melancholy sensibility which souls experience after long periods of revolution, gave birth on every side to unlimited hopes.

In Judea expectation was at its height. Holy persons, among whom are cited an aged Simeon, who according to the legend, held Jesus on his arms, and Anna, daughter of Phanuel, who was considered a prophetess,† passed their lives about the temple,

* Ecl. IV. The *Cumæum carmen* (v. 4) was a kind of Sibylline apocalypse, stamped with the philosophy and history familiar to the East. See Servius on this verse, and *Carmina Sibyllina*, III, 97–817. Cf. Tac., *Hist.*, V, 13.

† Luke, II, 25 seqq.

fasting and praying that it might please God not to take them from the world until they had seen the accomplishment of the hopes of Israel. A mighty incubation is felt, the imminence of something unknown.

This confused medley of visions and dreams, this alternation of hopes and deceptions, these aspirations incessantly trampled down by a hateful reality, at length found their interpreter in the incomparable man to whom the universal conscience has decreed the title of Son of God, and that with justice, since he caused religion to take a step in advance incomparably greater than any other in the past, and probably than any yet to come.

CHAPTER II.

CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH OF JESUS—HIS FIRST IMPRESSIONS.

Jesus was born at Nazareth,* a small town in Galilee, which before him had no celebrity.† All his life he was designated by the name of "Nazarene,"‡ and it is only by an awkward detour‖ that the legend succeeds in fixing his birth at Bethlehem. We shall further on see§ the motive of this supposition and

* Matt., XIII, 54 seqq.; Mark, VI, 1 seqq.; John I, 45, 46.

† It is not mentioned in the books of the Old Testament, or in Josephus or in the Talmud.

‡ Mark, I, 24; Luke, XVIII, 37; John, XIX, 19; *Acts*, II, 22; III, 6. Hence the name of *Nazarenes*, long applied to Christians, and which still designates them in all Mahometan countries.

‖ The assessment made by Quirinius, with which the legend connects the journey to Bethlehem, is subsequent by at least ten years to the year when, according to Luke and Matthew, Jesus was born. The two evangelists indeed place his birth under the reign of Herod (Matt., II, 1, 19, 22; Luke, I, 5). Now the assessment of Quirinius was not until after the deposition of Archelaus, ten years after the death of Herod, in the year 37 of the era of Actium (Josephus, *Ant.*, XVII, XIII, 5; XVIII, I, 1; II, 1). The inscription by which it was formerly attempted to show that Quirinius made two assessments is now known to be a forgery (see Orelli, *Ins. lat.*, No. 623, and the supplement of Henzen, same number; Borghesi, *Fastes consulaires* [still unpublished], at the year 742). The assessment in any event would be applied only to the parts reduced to Roman provinces and not to the tetrarchies. The texts by which it is sought to prove that some of the statistical and registrary acts ordered by Augustus extended over the domain of the Herods, either do not imply what they are made to say, or are by Christian authors, who have borrowed this item from Luke's gospel. But what fully proves that the journey of the family of Jesus to Bethlehem is unhistorical, is the reason which is given for it. Jesus was not of the family of David (see hereafter, 217), and, had he been, still we cannot conceive that his parents would have been compelled, for an act purely registrary and financial, to go to inscribe their names at a place their ancestors had left a thousand years before. By imposing such an obligation the Roman authority would have sanctioned claims full of danger to itself.

§ Ch XIV.

how it was the necessary consequence of the Messianic character attributed to Jesus.* The precise date of his birth is unknown. It occurred under the reign of Augustus, towards the year 750 of Rome, probably some years before the year 1 of the era which all civilized nations date from the day of his birth.†

The name of *Jesus*, which was given him, is a variation of *Joshua*. It was a very common name; but naturally mysteries were afterwards sought in it, and an allusion to his Saviorship.‡ Perhaps he himself, like all mystics, became exalted on this account. More than one great calling in history has thus been occasioned by a name casually given to a child. Ardent natures are never willing to see chance in anything that concerns them. For them all has been ordered by God, and they see a sign of the superior will in the most insignificant circumstances.

The population of Galilee was diversified, as even the name of the country‖ indicated. This province numbered among its inhabitants in the time of Jesus, many non-Jews (Phœnicians, Syrians, Arabs and even Greeks).§ Conversions to Judaism were not rare in these mixed countries. It is impossible therefore to

* Matt., II, 1 seqq.; Luke II, 1 seqq. The omission of this story in Mark and the two parallel passages, Matt., XIII, 54, and Mark VI, 1, in which Nazareth figures as the "own country" of Jesus, prove that there was no such legend in the primitive text which furnished the historical sketch of the present gospels of Matthew and Mark. It is in consequence of oft-repeated objections that the modifications at the beginning of Matthew would have been added, modifications not in such flagrant contradiction with the rest of the text that it was thought necessary to correct those places which had been written previously from an entirely different point of view. Luke, on the contrary (IV, 16), writing with reflection, uses, in order to be consistent, a modified expression. As to John, he knows nothing of the journey to Bethlehem; to him, Jesus is simply "of Nazareth" or a "Galilean" on two occasions when it would have been of the highest importance to quote his birth at Bethlehem (I, 45, 46; II, 41, 42).

† It is well known that the calculation which serves as the basis of the vulgar era was made in the sixth century by Dionysius the Little. This calculation is partly based on data which are purely hypothetical.

‡ Matt., I, 21; Luke I, 31.

‖ *Gelil Haggoyim*, circle of the Gentiles.

§ Strabo, XVI, I, 35; Jos., *Vita*, 12.

raise here any question of race and to inquire what blood flowed in the veins of him who has most contributed to efface in humanity all distinction of blood.

He came from the ranks of the people.* His father Joseph and his mother Mary were in moderate circumstances, artizans living by their toil,† in this condition so common in the East, which is neither ease nor want. The extreme simplicity of life in such countries, by removing the demand for comfort, renders the privilege of the rich almost useless and makes all voluntarily poor. On the other hand, the total lack of taste for the arts and for what contributes to the elegance of material life, gives to the houses of those who lack for nothing an appearance of privation. With the exception of something sordid and repulsive which Islamism carries with it every where, the town of Nazareth, in the time of Jesus, did not, perhaps, differ much from what it is to-day.‡ We see the streets in which he played when a child, in these stony paths or these little squares which separate the dwellings. The house of Joseph without doubt closely resembled those poor shops, lighted by the door, serving at once for the work-bench, as kitchen and as bedroom, having for furniture a mat, some cushions on the ground, one or two earthen vessels and a painted chest.

The family, whether the product of one or more marriages, was rather numerous. Jesus had brothers

* The origin of the genealogies intended to connect him with the house of David will be explained hereafter (ch. XIV). The Ebionim suppressed them (Epiph., *Adv. hær.*, XXX, 14).

† Matt., XIII, 55; Mark, VI, 3; John, VI, 42.

‡ The rude appearance of the ruins which cover Palestine proves that the towns which were not reconstructed in the Roman style, were very badly built. As to the form of these houses, it is, in Syria, so simple and so imperiously demanded by the climate, that it could never have changed.

and sisters,* who seem to have been younger than he.† All remained unknown; for it appears that the four persons who are given as his brothers, and among whom one at least, James, attained great importance in the first years of the development of Christianity, were his cousins german. Mary, indeed, had a sister named Mary also,‡ who married a certain Alpheus or Cleophas (these two names appear to designate the same person).‖ and was the mother of several sons who played a very considerable part among the first disciples of Jesus. His cousins german, who adhered to the young master, while his real brothers were opposed to him,§ assumed the title of "brothers of the Lord."¶ The real brothers of Jesus, as well as their mother, had no importance until after his death.** Even then they do not appear to have equalled their cousins in consideration, whose conversion had been

* Matt., XII, 46 seqq.; XIII, 55 seqq.; Mark, III, 31 seqq.; VI, 3. Luke, VIII, 19 seqq.; John, II, 12; VII, 3, 5, 10; *Acts*, I, 14.

† Matt., I, 25.

‡ That these two sisters bore the same name is a singular fact. Probably there is some mistake about it, arising from the habit of giving the Galilean women almost indiscriminately the name of Mary.

‖ They are not etymologically identical. Ἀλφαῖος is the transcription of the Syro-Chaldaic name *Hulphai;* Κλωπᾶς or Κλεόπας is a shortened form of Κλεόπατρος. But there may have been an artificial substitution of one for the other, as the Josephs called themselves "Hegesippus", the Eliakims "Alcimus", etc.

§ John, VII, 3 seqq.

¶ Indeed the four persons who are given (Matt., XIII, 55; Mark, VI, 3) as sons of Mary, the mother of Jesus: James, Joseph or Joses, Simon and Juda, appear again, or nearly so, as the sons of Mary and Cleophas (Matt., XXVII, 56; Mark, XV, 40; *Gal.*, I, 19; James, I, 1; Jude, 1; Euseb., *Chron.*, ad ann. R. DCCCX; *Hist. eccl.*, III, 11, 32; *Constit. Apost.*, VII, 46). The hypothesis which we have proposed alone relieves us from the enormous difficulty of supposing two sisters each having three or four sons bearing the same names and admitting that James and Simon, the first two bishops of Jerusalem, called the "brothers of the Lord," were the real brothers of Jesus, who were hostile to him at first, but were afterwards converted. The evangelist, hearing these four sons called "brothers of the Lord," might have put, by mistake, their names in the passage, Matt., XIII, 55 — Mark, VI, 3, in place of the names of the real brothers, who still remained in obscurity. We may thus explain how the character of the persons called "brothers of the Lord," of James for example, is so different from that of the real brothers of Jesus, as we see it drawn in John, VII, 3 seqq. The expression "brother of the Lord" evidently constituted in the primitive church a kind of order something like that of the apostles. See especially I *Cor.*, IX, 5.

** *Acts*, I, 14.

more spontaneous, and whose character appears to have had more originality. Their names were unknown, to such a degree that when the evangelist puts in the mouth of the people of Nazareth the enumeration of the natural brothers, it is the names of the sons of Cleophas which are immediately presented to his mind.

His sisters married at Nazareth,* and there he spent his early years. Nazareth was a little town, situated in a fold of land broadly open at the summit of the group of mountains which closes on the north the plain of Esdraelon. The population is now from three to four thousand and it cannot have varied very much.† It is quite cold in winter and the climate is very healthy. The town, like all the Jewish villages of the time, was a mass of dwellings built without pretensions to style, and must have presented that poor and uninteresting appearance which is offered by villages in Semitic countries. The houses, from all that appears, did not differ much from those cubes of stone, without interior or exterior elegance, which now cover the richest portion of the Lebanon, and which in the midst of vines and fig-trees, are nevertheless very pleasant. The environs, moreover, are charming, and no place in the world was so well adapted to dreams of absolute happiness. Even in our days, Nazareth is a delightful sojourn, the only place perhaps in Palestine where the soul feels a little relieved of the burden which weighs upon it in the midst of this unequalled desolation. The people are friendly and good-natured; the gardens are fresh and green. Antoninus Martyr, at the

* Mark, VI, 3.

† According to Josephus (*B. J.* III, III. 2), the smallest village in Galilee had more than five thousand inhabitants. There is probably in this some exaggeration

end of the sixth century draws an enchanting picture of the fertility of the environs, which he compares to paradise.* Some valleys on the western side fully justify his description. The fountain about which the life and gayety of the little town formerly centered has been destroyed; its broken channels now give but a turbid water. But the beauty of the women who gather there at night, this beauty which was already remarked in the sixth century, and in which was seen the gift of the Virgin Mary,† has been surprisingly well preserved. It is the Syrian type in all its languishing grace. There is no doubt that Mary was there nearly every day and took her place, with her urn upon her shoulder, in the same line with her unremembered countrywomen. Antoninus Martyr remarks that the Jewish women, elsewhere disdainful to Christians, are here full of affability. Even at this day, religious animosities are less intense at Nazareth than elsewhere.

The horizon of the town is limited, but if we ascend a little to the plateau swept by a perpetual breeze, which commands the highest houses, the prospect is splendid. To the west are unfolded the beautiful lines of Carmel, terminating in an abrupt point which seems to plunge into the sea. Then stretch away the double summit which looks down upon Megiddo, the mountains of the country of Shechem with their holy places of the patriarchal age, the mountains of Gilboa, the picturesque little group with which are associated the graceful and terrible memories of Solam and of Endor, and Thabor with its finely-rounded form, which antiquity compared to a breast. Through a de-

* *Itiner.*, § 5. † Antoninus Martyr, *loc. cit.*

pression between the mountains of Solam and Thabor, are seen the valley of the Jordan and the high plains of Peræa which form a continuous line in the east. To the north, the mountains of Safed, sloping towards the sea, hide St. Jean d'Acre, but disclose the gulf of Khaifa. Such was the horizon of Jesus. This enchanted circle, the cradle of the kingdom of God, represented the world to him for years. His life even went little beyond the limits familiar to his childhood. For, beyond, to the north, you almost see upon the slope of Hermon, Cesarea Philippi, his most advanced point into the Gentile world, and to the south, you feel behind these already less cheerful mountains of Samaria, sad Judea, withered as by a burning blast of abstraction and of death.

If ever the world still Christian, but having attained a better idea of what constitutes respect for origins, shall desire to substitute authentic holy places for the mean and apocryphal sanctuaries which were seized upon by the piety of the barbarous ages, it is upon this height of Nazareth that it will build its temple. There, at the point of advent of Christianity, and at the centre of action of its founder, should rise the great church in which all Christians might pray. There also, upon this soil in which sleep Joseph the carpenter, and thousands of forgotten Nazarenes, who have never crossed the horizon of their valley, the philosopher would be better situated than in any other place in the world, to contemplate the course of human things, to find consolation for their uncertainty, to find faith in the divine object which the world pursues through innumerable dejections, and notwithstanding the vanity of all things.

CHAPTER III.

EDUCATION OF JESUS.

This nature at once smiling and grand, was the whole education of Jesus. He learned to read and write,* doubtless according to the method of the East, which consists in putting into the hands of the child a book, that he repeats in concert with his little school-fellows until he knows it by heart.† It is doubtful, however, whether he really understood the Hebrew writings in their original tongue. The biographies make him quote from them in the Aramæan tongue; his principles of exegesis, as nearly as we can make them out from those of his disciples, closely resembled those which were current at that time,‡ and which compose the spirit of the *Targums* and the *Midraschim*.§

The school-master in the little Jewish towns was the *hazzan*, or reader of the synagogue.‖ Jesus attended little upon the higher schools of the scribes or *soferim*, (Nazareth perhaps had none), and he had none of those titles which confer in the eyes of the common people the privileges of learning.¶ It would be a

* John, VIII, 6.
† *Testam. des douze Patr.* Levi, 6.
‡ Matt., XXVII, 46; Mark, XV, 34.
§ Jewish translations and commentaries of the Talmudic epoch.
‖ Mischna, *Schabbath*, I, 3.
¶ Matt., XIII, 54 seqq.; John, VII, 15.

great mistake, however, to suppose that Jesus was what we call illiterate. The education of the schools marks among us a wide distinction, in the relation of personal worth, between those who have received i and those who have been deprived of it. It was not thus in the East, nor generally in the good old ages The crude condition in which, among us, in consequence of our isolated and entirely individual life, he remains, who has not been to the schools, is unknown in these forms of society where moral culture and especially the general spirit of the time are transmitted by perpetual contact with men. The Arab, who has had no school-master, is often highly distinguished nevertheless; for the tent is a kind of school always open, where the meeting of well-bred people gives birth to a great intellectual and even literary movement. Delicacy of manners and acuteness of mind have nothing in common in the East with what we call education. On the contrary, the school men are considered pedantic and ill-bred. In this state of society, ignorance, which among us condemns a man to an inferior rank, is the condition of great deeds and of great originality.

It is not probable that he knew Greek. This language was little known in Judea beyond the classes which participated in the government of the towns inhabited by pagans, like Cesarea.* The native idiom of Jesus was the Syriac dialect mixed with Hebrew, which was then spoken in Palestine.† Still less

* Mischna, *Schekalim*, III, 2; Talmud of Jerusalem, *Megilla*, halaca XI; *Sota*, VIII, 1; Talmud of Babylon, *Babi Kama*, 83 *a*; *Megilla*, 8 *b* seqq.

† Matt., XXVII, 46; Mark, III, 17; V, 41; VII, 34; XIV, 36; XV, 34. The expression ἡ πάτριος φωνή, in the writers of this time, always designates the Semitic dialect which was spoken in Palestine (II Mac., VII, 21, 27; XII, 37; *Acts*, XXI, 37, 40; XXII 2; XXVI, 14; Josephus, *Ant.*, XVIII, VI, 10; XX, *sub. fin.*; *B. J.* proœm. 1.

had he any knowledge of Greek culture. This culture was proscribed by the Palestinian doctors, who united in the same malediction "he who breeds swine and he who teaches his son the wisdom of the Greeks."* At all events, it had not penetrated into little towns like Nazareth. Notwithstanding the anathema of the doctors, it is true, some Jews had already embraced the Hellenic culture. Not to speak of the Jewish school of Egypt, in which attempts to amalgamate Hellenism and Judaism had been continued for nearly two hundred years, Nicholas of Damascus had become at this very time, one of the most distinguished, most learned and most honored men of his age. Very soon Josephus was to furnish another example of a Jew completely Hellenized. But Nicholas was Jewish in nothing but race; Josephus declares that he was an exception among his cotemporaries,† and the whole schismatic school of Egypt had so completely detached itself from Jerusalem, that no mention of it is found either in the Talmud or in Jewish tradition. It is certain that at Jerusalem Greek was very little studied, that Greek studies were considered dangerous and even servile; that they were declared good at most as an ornament for women.‡ The study of the Law alone was considered liberal and worthy of a serious man.‖ A learned rabbi, when asked at what

V, VI, 3; V, IX, 2; VI, II, 1; *Contra Apion.*, I, 9; *De Macch.*, 12, 16). We shall show hereafter that some of the documents which served as a basis for the synoptic evangelists were written in this Semitic dialect. The same was the case with several of the apocryphal books (IV Mac., ad calcem, etc.). In short, the Christian community which issued directly from the first Galilean movement (Nazarenes, *Elionim*, etc.), which long continued in Batanea and Haouran, spoke a Semitic dialect (Eusebius, *De situ et nomin. loc. hebr.*, at the word Χωβά; Epiph. *Adv. hær.*, XXIX, 7, 9; XXX, 3; St. Jerome, In Matth., XII, 13; *Dial. adv. Pelag.*, III, 2).

* Mischna, *Sanhedrin*, XI, 1; Talmud of Babylon, *Baba Kama*, 82 *b* and 83 *a*; *Sota*, 49, *a* and *b*; *Menachoth*, 64 *b*; Comp. II, Mac., IV, 10 seqq.

† Jos., *Ant.*, XX, XI, 2.

‡ Talmud of Jerusalem, *Peah*, I, 1.

‖ Jos., *Ant.*, loc. cit.; Orig., *Contra Celsum*, II, 34.

time it was proper to teach children "the wisdom of the Greeks," answered: "At the hour which is neither day nor night, for it is written of the Law: Thou shalt study it day and night."*

Neither directly nor indirectly, therefore, did any element of Hellenic culture make its way to Jesus. He knew nothing beyond Judaism, his mind preserved this frank simplicity which is always enfeebled by an extensive and varied culture. In the very bosom of Judaism, he was still a stranger to many efforts some of which were parallel to his own. On one hand, the asceticism of the Essenes, or Therapeutes,† on the other, the fine essays in religious philosophy, made by the Jewish school of Alexandria, and ingeniously interpreted by Philo, his cotemporary, were to him unknown. The frequent resemblances which we find between him and Philo, those excellent maxims of the love of God, of charity, of rest in God,‡ which seem an echo between the Gospel and the writings of the illustrious Alexandrian thinker, come from the common tendencies which the demands of the age inspired in all elevated souls.

Happily for him, he knew no more of the grotesque scholasticism which was taught at Jerusalem, and which was soon to constitute the Talmud. If a few Pharisees had already brought it to Galilee, he did not attend upon them, and when he afterwards came in contact with this silly casuistry, it inspired in him nothing but disgust. We may suppose, however, that

* Talmud of Jerusalem, *Peah*, I, 1; Talmud of Babylon, *Menachoth*, 99 *b*.

† The *Therapeutes* of Philo are a branch of the Essenes. Their name even appears to be only a Greek translation of that of the Essenes (Ἐσσαῖοι, *asaya*, "physicians"). Cf. Philo, *De Vita contempl. init.*

‡ See especially the treatises *Quis rerum divinarum hæres sit* and *De Philanthropia* of Philo.

the principles of Hillel were not unknown to him. Hillel, fifty years before him, had pronounced aphorisms closely analogous to his. By his poverty endured with humility, by the sweetness of his character, by the opposition which he made to the hypocrites and priests, Hillel was the real teacher of Jesus,* if we may say teacher when speaking of so lofty an originality.

The reading of the books of the Old Testament produced upon him much greater impression. The canon of the sacred books was composed of two principal parts—the Law, that is, the Pentateuch, and the Prophets as we now possess them. A vast allegorical exegesis was applied to all these books, and sought to extract what is not in them, but what responded to the aspirations of the time. The Law, which represented, not the ancient laws of the country, but rather utopias, the factitious laws and the pious frauds of the time of the pietistic kings, had become, since the nation had ceased to govern itself, an inexhaustible theme of subtle interpretations. As to the prophets and psalms, they were persuaded that nearly all the allusions in these books which were even slightly mysterious, related to the Messiah, and they sought in advance the type of him who was to realize the hopes of the nation. Jesus shared the universal taste for these allegorical interpretations. But the real poetry of the Bible, which was lost to the puerile expositors of Jerusalem, was fully revealed to his exquisite genius. The Law appears to have had for him but little charm; he thought he could do better. But the religious poetry of the psalms was in won-

* *Pirke Aboth* ch. I and II; Talm. of Jerus., *Pesachim*, VI, 1; Talm. of Bab., *Pesachim*, 66 *a*; *Schabbath*, 30 *b* and 31 *a*; *Joma*, 35 *b*.

derful harmony with his lyrical soul; all his life they were his sustenance and his support. The prophets, Isaiah in particular and his continuator of the time of the captivity, with their splendid dreams of the future, their impetuous eloquence and their invectives intermingled with enchanting pictures, were his real teachers. Undoubtedly he read also many modern writings, whose authors, to gain an authority now accorded only to very ancient writings, hid themselves beneath the names of prophets and patriarchs. One of these books made a deep impression upon him, the book of Daniel. This book, composed by an exalted Jew of the time of Antiochus Epiphanes, and placed by him under the shelter of an ancient sage,* was the summing up of the spirit of the latter days. Its author, the real creator of the philosophy of history, for the first time dared to see in the movement of the world, and the succession of empires, merely a function subordinate to the destiny of the Jewish people. Jesus was at an early period thrilled by these lofty hopes. Perhaps also, he read the books of Enoch, then revered equally with the sacred books,† and the other writings of the same kind, which upheld so great a movement in the popular imagination. The advent of the Messiah with his glories and his terrors, the nations dashing one against another, the cataclysm of heaven and earth, were the familiar food of his imagination, and as these revolutions were thought

* The legend of Daniel was already formed in the seventh century B. C. (Ezekiel xiv, 14 seqq.; xxviii, 3). It was for the necessities of the legend that he was made to live in the time of the Babylonish captivity.

† Jude, 14 seqq. II Petri, ii, 4, 1; *Testam. des douze Patr.*, Simeon, 5; Levi, 14, 16; Juda, 18; Zab. 3.; Dan. 5; Nephtali, 4. The "Book of Enoch" still forms an integral portion of the Ethiopian Bible As it has come to us in the Ethiopian version, it is composed of pieces of different dates, the oldest of which are of the year 130 or 150 B. C. Some of the pieces are analagous to the discourses of Jesus. Compare ch. xcvi–xcix with Luke, vi, 24 seqq.

to be at hand, so that a multitude of people were seeking to compute their times, the supernatural order of things into which such visions transport us, appeared to him from the first perfectly simple and natural.

That he had no knowledge of the general condition of the world may be learned from every line of his most authentic discourses. The earth to him appears still to be divided into kingdoms which are at war; he seems to be ignorant of the "Roman peace," and the new state of society which his century inaugurated. He had no precise idea of the Roman power; the name of "Cæsar" alone had reached him. He saw the building, in Galilee or its environs, of Tiberias, Julias, Diocesarea and Cesarea, pompous works of the Herods who sought by these magnificent constructions, to prove their admiration for Roman civilization and their devotion to the members of the family of Augustus, whose names by a freak of fate, serve to-day, grotesquely mutilated, to designate the wretched hamlets of the Bedouins. Probably he saw also Sebaste, the work of Herod the Great, a gala city, whose ruins would lead to the belief that it was brought ready made, like a piece of mechanism which had only to be set up in its place. This ostentatious architecture, which arrived in Judea by cargoes, these hundreds of columns all of the same diameter, the ornament of some insipid "Rue de Rivoli," such is what he called "the kingdoms of the world and all their glory." But this luxury of power, this governmental and official art was displeasing to him. What he loved was his Galilean villages, confused medleys of cabins, of threshing-floors and wine-presses cut in the rock, of wells and tombs, of fig and olive trees. He always continued near to na-

ture. The court of the kings seemed to him a place where people wear fine clothes.* The charming impossibilities with which his parables swarm, when he puts kings and mighty men upon the scene,† proves that he had no conception of aristocratic society save that of a young villager who sees the world through the prism of his own simplicity.

Still less was he acquainted with the new idea, created by Greek science, which is the basis of all philosophy and which modern science has fully confirmed, the exclusion of the capricious gods to whom the early faith of the ancient ages attributed the government of the universe. Nearly a century before him Lucretius had given admirable expression to the inflexibility of the general regime of nature. The negation of miracle, this idea that everything is produced in the world by laws in which the personal intervention of superior beings has no share, was the common law in the great schools of all countries which had received Greek science. Perhaps even Babylon and Persia were not strangers to it. Jesus knew nothing of this advance. Though born at a time when the principle of positive science had already been proclaimed, he lived in the midst of the supernatural. Never perhaps had the Jews been more devoured by the thirst of the marvellous. Philo, who lived in a great intellectual centre, and who had received a very complete education, has only a false chimerical science.

Jesus differed in this point in no wise from his countrymen. He believed in the devil whom he looked upon as a sort of genius of evil,‡ and imagined, with

* Matt., xi, 8. † See, for example, Matt., xxii, 2 seqq. ‡ Matt., vi, 13.

every other, that nervous diseases were the work of demons, who took possession of the patient and tormented him. To him the marvellous was not the exceptional; it was the moral condition. The idea of the supernatural with its impossibilities, was not conceived until the day when the experimental science of nature was discovered. The man who is a stranger to all notion of physics, who believes that by a prayer he changes the course of the clouds, controls disease and even death itself, sees nothing extraordinary in miracle, since the whole course of things is to him the result of the free volitions of divinity. This intellectual state was always that of Jesus. But in his great soul such a faith produced effects entirely different from those which it produced upon the multitude. With the multitude, faith in the special action of God led to a silly credulity and to the deceptions of charlatans. To him it gave a deep idea of the familiar relations of man with God and an exaggerated faith in the might of man; admirable errors which were the principle of his power; for if they were one day to put him to the fault in the eyes of the physicist and the chemist, they gave him a power over his time which no individual ever wielded before or since.

Early in life his peculiar character revealed itself. Tradition delights in showing him even when a child in rebellion against the paternal authority and leaving the common track to follow his calling.* It is certain at least that the relations of kindred were little to him. His family seems not to have loved him,†

* Luke, II, 42 seqq. The apocryphal gospels are full of such stories carried to the grotesque.

† Matt., XIII, 57; Mark, VI, 4; John VII, 3 seqq See hereafter, page 153, note 6

and at times, we find him harsh towards them.* Jesus like all men exclusively absorbed in an idea, came to make small account of ties of blood. The bond of the idea is the only one which such natures recognize. "Behold my mother and my brethren," said he stretching forth his hand towards his disciples; "whosoever shall do the will of my father, the same is my brother and my sister." The simple people did not understand him thus, and one day a woman, passing by him, exclaimed, it is said: "Blessed the womb that bare thee, and the paps that gave thee suck!" "Blessed rather," he answered, "they that hear the word of God and keep it."† Soon, in his daring revolt against nature, he was to go still farther, and we shall see him trampling under his feet all that is human, kindred, love, country, devoting heart and soul only to the idea which appeared to him as the absolute form of the good and the true.

* Matt., xii, 48; Mark, iii, 33; Luke, viii, 21; John, ii, 4; Gospel according to the Hebrews, in St. Jerome, *Dial. adv. Pelag.*, III, 2.
† Luke, xi, 27 seqq.

CHAPTER IV.

ORDER OF IDEAS AMID WHICH JESUS WAS DEVELOPED

As the cooled earth permits us no longer to comprehend the phenomena of the primitive creation, because the fire which pervaded it is extinguished, so the explanations of reason are always insufficient in some respect, when we apply our timid processes of induction to the revolutions of those creative epochs which have decided the destiny of the human race. Jesus lived in one of those periods when the part of public life is played with freedom, when the stakes of human activity are centupled. Every grand life, then, insures death; for such movements presuppose a liberty and an absence of preventive measures, which cannot exist without a terrible counterpoise. Now, man risk little and wins little. In the heroic ages of human activity man risked all and won all. The good and the bad, or at least those who considered themselves and were considered such, form opposing armies. By the scaffold lies the path to apotheosis; grand characters have incriminated traits which engrave them as eternal types in the memory of men. If we except the French Revolution, no historic medium was so fitting as that in which Jesus was formed, to develop those

hidden powers which humanity holds as if in reserve, and which she never reveals except in her days of fever and of danger.

If the government of the world were a speculative problem, and the greatest philosopher were the man best fitted to tell his fellows what they should believe, then from calmness and reflection would spring those grand moral and doctrinal rules which are called religions. But it is not so. If we except Sakya-Mouni, the great religious founders have not been metaphysicians. Buddhism itself, although the product of pure thought, conquered half of Europe for reasons entirely political and moral. As to the Semitic religions, they are as little philosophic as possible. Moses and Mahomet were never given to speculation; they were men of action. It was by proposing action to their countrymen, their cotemporaries, that they mastered humanity. Jesus, likewise, was no theologian, no philosopher with a system more or less admirable. To be a disciple of Jesus, it was necessary to sign no formula, to pronounce no profession of faith; but a single thing was necessary, to follow him, to love him. He never argued in relation to God, for he felt him directly within himself. The shoal of metaphysical subtleties upon which Christianity struck in the third century, was in no wise the work of the founder. Jesus had neither dogmas nor system, but a fixed personal resolve, which, having surpassed in intensity every other created will, directs even to this hour the destinies of humanity.

The Jewish people had the advantage, from the Babylonish captivity to the middle ages, of being always in a very intense condition. This is why the deposita-

ries of the national spirit, during this long period, seem to write under the action of a high fever, which places them continually above and beneath reason, rarely in its medium path. Never had man seized upon the problem of the future and of his destiny with a courage more desperate, more determined to rush to extremes. Making no separation of the fate of humanity from that of their little race, the Jewish thinkers are the first who cared for a general theory of the progress of our species. Greece, always shut up in herself, and mindful only of the quarrels of her little towns, had admirable historians; but before the Roman epoch, we may search Greece in vain for a general system of historical philosophy, embracing all humanity. The Jew, on the contrary, thanks to a kind of prophetic sense which at times renders the Semite marvellously apt to see the grand outlines of the future, carried history into religion. Perhaps he owes a little of this spirit to Persia. Persia, from a remote epoch, conceived the history of the world as a series of evolutions, over which a prophet presides. Each prophet has his *hazar*, or reign of a thousand years, (chiliasm), and of these successive ages, analogous to the millions of centuries of each buddha of India, is the woof of events composed which prepares for the reign of Ormuzd. At the end of time, when the circle of chiliasms shall be exhausted, will come the final paradise. Men will then live happy; the earth will be like a plain; there will be but one language, one law, and one government for all men. But this advent will be preceded by terrible calamities. Dahak (the Satan of Persia) will break the chains which bind him and will fall upon the world. Two prophets will come

to console men and to prepare for the grand advent.* These ideas made their way over the world and penetrated even to Rome, where they inspired a cycle of prophetic poems, the fundamental ideas of which were the division of the history of humanity into periods, the succession of the gods corresponding to these periods, a complete renewal of the world, and the final advent of the golden age.† The book of Daniel, the book of Enoch, and certain portions of the Sibylline books,‡ are the Jewish expression of the same theory. It is true that these were not the thoughts of all. They were embraced at first only by a few persons of lively imagination and inclined to foreign doctrines. The arid and narrow-minded author of the book of Esther never thought of the rest of the world except with feelings of malevolence and disdain.§ The disabused epicurean who wrote Ecclesiastes, thinks so little of the future that he considers it useless even to labor for his children; in the eyes of this egotistic bachelor the final word of wisdom is to spend as you go.‖ But the great deeds of a nation are usually done by the minority. With its enormous faults, harsh, egotistic, sneering, cruel, narrow, subtle, sophistical, the Jewish nation is still the author of the finest movement of disinterested enthusiasm in all history. The opposition always creates the glory of a country. The greatest men of a nation are those which it puts to death. Socrates created the glory of Athens, who deemed that she could not live with him. Spinoza is the greatest of modern

* *Vacna*, XIII, 24; Theopompus, in Plut., *De Iside et Osiride*, § 47; *Minokhired*, passage published in the *Zeitschrift der Deutschen morgenlandischen Gesellschaft*, I, p. 263

† Virg., Ecl. IV; Servius, on v. 4 of this eclogue; Nigidius, cited by Servius on v 10.

‡ Book III, 97–817.

§ VI, 13; VII; 10; VIII, 7, 11–17; IX, 1–22; and in the apocryphal portions: IX, 10, 11 XIV, 13 seqq.; XVI, 20, 24.

‖ Eccl., I, 11; II, 16, 18–24; III, 19–22; IV 8, 15, 16; V, 17, 18; VI, 3, 6; VIII, 15; IX, 9, 10

Jews, and the synagogue expelled him with ignominy Jesus was the glory of the people of Israel, who crucified him.

A gigantic dream for centuries had pursued the Jewish people, and renewed it continually in its decrepitude. A stranger to the theory of individual recompense, which Greece had disseminated under the name of the immortality of the soul, Judea had concentrated upon her national future all her power to love and to desire. She believed that she had the divine promise of a limitless future, and as the bitter reality, which, from the ninth century before our era, gave the kingdom of the world more and more to force, brutally trampled down these aspirations, she threw herself upon the most impossible alliances of ideas, and attempted the strangest expedients. Before the captivity, when all the earthly future of the nation was dissipated by the separation of the northern tribes, they dreamed of the restoration of the house of David, the reconciliation of the two fragments of the people, and the triumph of theocracy and the worship of Jehovah over the idolatrous worships. At the time of the captivity, a poet, full of harmony, saw the splendor of a future Jerusalem, to which the nations and the far-off isles should be tributary, in colors so soft that one would have said that a ray from the beaming face of Jesus illumined it at a distance of six hundred years.*

The victory of Cyrus seemed for a time to realize all that had been hoped. The grave disciples of the Avesta and the worshippers of Jehovah believed themselves brothers. Persia had succeeded, by banishing

* Isaiah, LX, etc.

the multitudinous *devas* and transforming them into demons (*divs*), in drawing from the ancient Arian conceptions, essentially naturalistic, a species of monotheism. The prophetic tone of many of the precepts of Iran had close analogy to certain compositions of Hosea and Isaiah. Israel rested under the Achæmenides,* and, under Xerxes (Ahasuerus), made himself feared by the Iranians themselves. But the triumphal and often brutal entrance of the Greek and Roman civilization into Asia, threw him back into his dreams. More than ever, he invoked the Messiah as judge and avenger of the nations. He required a renewal of all things, a revolution taking the globe by the roots and shaking it from top to bottom, to satisfy the enormous demand which was excited in him by the feeling of his superiority and the sight of his humiliations.†

Had Israel possessed the doctrine, termed spiritualistic, which separates man into two parts, body and soul, and thinks it perfectly natural that while the body rots, the soul survives, this storm of rage and energetic protest would have had no cause for existence. But this doctrine, sprung from Greek philosophy, was not in the traditions of the Jewish mind. The ancient Hebrew writings contain no trace of future rewards or punishments. While the idea of the solidarity of the tribe existed, it was natural not to look for strict retribution according to the merits of each person. Wo to the pious man who fell upon an impious age; he suffered with the rest the public calamities flowing from the general impiety. This doctrine, handed down from the wise men of the patriarchal period, resulted every day in indefensible contradictions.

* The whole book of Esther breathes a spirit of strong attachment to this dynasty.

† Apocryphal letter of Baruch, in Fabricius, *Cod. pseud. V. T.*, II p. 147 seqq.

Even in the time of Job it was severely shaken; the old men of Teman who professed it were men behind the times, and the young Elihu, who comes in to oppose them, dares to put forth first of all this essentially revolutionary idea: wisdom is no longer to the aged.* With the complications which the world had assumed since Alexander, the old Temanite and Mosaic principle became still more intolerable.† Never had Israel been more faithful to the Law, and yet they had suffered the atrocious persecutions of Antiochus. Only a declaimer, accustomed to repeat ancient phrases denuded of meaning, dared profess that these woes came because of the unfaithfulness of the people.‡ What! these victims who died for their faith, these heroic Maccabees, this mother with her seven sons, shall Jehovah forget them eternally, abandon them to the corruption of the grave? ‖ An incredulous and worldly Sadducee, indeed, might not shrink before such a result; a consummate sage, like Antigonus de Soco,§ indeed, might maintain that we must not practice virtue like a slave for a reward, that we must be virtuous without expectation. But the mass of the nation could not be satisfied with that. Some, cleaving to the principle of philosophic immortality, pictured to themselves the just living in the memory of God, glorious forever in the remembrance of men, judging the impious who have persecuted them.¶ "They live in the eyes of

* Job, xxxii, 9.

† It is remarkable however that Jesus, son of Sirach, adheres to it strictly (xvii. 2-28; xxii, 10, 11; xxx, 4 seqq.; xli, 1, 2; xliv, 9). The author of *Wisdom* is of an entirely different opinion (iv. 1, Greek text).

‡ *Est.*, xiv, 6, 7 (apocr.); Apocryphal Epistle of Baruch (Fabricius, *Cod. pseud. V. T.* II, p. 147 seqq.). ‖ II, Macc., vii. § *Pirke Aboth.*, i, 3.

¶ *Wisdom*, ch. ii-vi; *De rationis imperio*, attributed to Josephus, 8, 13, 16, 18. Still we must remark that the author of this last treatise gives the motive of personal remuneration only the second place. "The principal motive of the martyrs is the pure love of the Law, the advantage which their death will bring to the people and the glory which will be attached to their name. Comp. *Wisdom*, iv 1 seqq.; Eccl., xliv seqq.; Jos. *B. J.*, II, viii, 10; III, viii, 5.

God;"* such is their recompense. Others, the Pharisees especially, had recourse to the dogma of the resurrection.† The just will live again to share in the Messianic reign. They will live again in the flesh, and for a world of which they will be the kings and judges; they will witness the triumph of their ideas and the humiliation of their enemies.

We find among the ancient people of Israel only very uncertain traces of this fundamental dogma. The Sadducee, who did not believe in it, was in reality faithful to the old Jewish doctrine; the Pharisee, the partizan of resurrection, was the innovator. But in religion it is always the zealous portion which makes innovations; it is the party of progress, it is that which achieves results. The resurrection, an idea totally different from the immortality of the soul, moreover, grew very naturally out of the former doctrines and condition of the people. Perhaps Persia also furnished some of its elements.‡ At all events, combining with the belief in the Messiah and the doctrine of a speedy renewal of all things, it formed those apocalyptic theories which, without being articles of faith (the orthodox sanhedrim of Jerusalem seems not to have adopted them), were rife in the imagination of all and produced from one end to the other of the Jewish world an intense fermentation. The total absence of dogmatic rigor allowed very contradictory notions to be accepted at the same time, even on a point so important. Sometimes the just man was to await the resurrection;‖ sometimes he was received at the moment of his death into Abraham's bosom.§ Sometimes the resurrection

* *Wisdom*, IV, 1; *De rat. imp.*, 16, 18.
† II Macc., VII, 9, 14; XII, 43, 44
‡ Theopompus, Diog. Laert., Procem., 9. *Boundehesch*, c. XXXI. The traces of the doctrine of the resurrection in the Avesta are very doubtful
‖ John, XI, 24.
§ Luke, XVI, 22. Cf. *De rat. imp.*, 13, 16, 18.

was universal,* sometimes reserved for the faithful alone.† Sometimes it supposed a renewed earth and a new Jerusalem: sometimes it imp'ied a preliminary annihilation of the universe.

Jesus, with his earliest thoughts, entered into the burning atmosphere which created in Palestine the ideas that we have set forth. These ideas were taught at no school; but they were in the air, and his soul was soon filled with them. Our hesitations, our doubts never reached him. Upon this summit of the mountain of Nazareth, where no modern man can sit without an anxious feeling, perhaps frivolous in regard to his future, Jesus has sat twenty times without a doubt. Free from selfishness, the source of our sorrows, which makes us seek greedily an interest beyond the tomb for virtue, he thought only of his work, his race, humanity. To him these mountains, this sea, this azure sky, these high plains in the horizon were not the melancholy vision of a soul questioning nature as to its fate, but the sure symbol, the transparent shadow of an invisible world and a new heaven.

He never attached much importance to the political events of his time, and he was probably ill-informed concerning them. The dynasty of the Herods lived in a world so different from his, that undoubtedly he knew it only by name. Herod the Great died about the year of his birth, leaving imperishable memories, monuments which were to force the most malevolent posterity to associate his name with that of Solomon, nevertheless an unfinished work, impossible of continuation. An ambitious wordling wandering in a labyrinth of religious strife, this astute Idumean had that ad-

* Dan., XII, 2. † II Macc., VII, 14.

vantage which is given by coolness and reason, devoid of morality, in the midst of passionate fanatics. But his idea of a worldly kingdom of Israel, even had it not been an anachronism in the state of the world in which he conceived it, would have fallen like the similar project formed by Solomon, from the difficulties arising out of the very character of the nation. His three sons were only lieutenants of the Romans, analogous to the rajahs of India under the English rule. Antipater or Antipas, tetrarch of Galilee and Perea, whose subject Jesus was all his life, was an idle prince, a nobody,* a favorite and parasite of Tiberius,† too often led astray by the evil influence of his second wife Herodias.‡ Philip, tetrarch of Gaulonitis and Batanea, to whose territory Jesus made frequent journeys, was a much better sovereign.§ As to Archelaus, ethnarch of Jerusalem, Jesus could not have known him. He was about ten years old when this man, weak, characterless, and sometimes violent, was deposed by Augustus.‖ The last trace of autonomy was now lost to Jerusalem. United with Samaria and Idumea, Judea formed a sort of additament of the province of Syria, where the senator Publius Sulpicius Quirinius, a consul well known¶ in history, was imperial legate. A series of Roman procurators, subordinate in questions of importance to the imperial legate of Syria, Coponius, Marcus Ambivius, Annius Rufus, Valerius Gratus, and, at length (A. D. 26), Pontius Pilatus, followed, con-

* Jos., *Ant.*, XVIII, v, 1; VII, 1, 2; Luke, III, 19.
† Jos., *Ant.*, XVIII, II, 3; IV, 5; V, 1. ‡ *Ibid.*, XVIII, VII, 2.
§ *Ibid.*, XVIII, 4, 6. ‖ *Ibid.*, XVII, XII, 2. *B. J.*, II, VII, 3.
¶ Orelli, *Inscr. lat.*, No. 3693; Henzen, *Suppl.*, No. 7041; *Fasti prænestini*, at March 6th and April 28th (in the *Corpus inscr. lat.*, I, 314, 317); Borghesi, *Fastes consulaires* [not yet published], at the year 742; R. Bergmann, *De inscr. lat. ad P. S. Quirinium, ut videtur, referenda* (Berlin 1851). Cf. Tac., *Ann.*, II, 30; III, 48; Strabo, XII, VI, 5.

stantly occupied in extinguishing the volcano which was in eruption beneath their feet.*

Continual seditions excited by the zealots of Mosaism, kept Jerusalem, indeed, in incessant agitation during this whole period.† The death of the seditious was certain; but death, when the integrity of the Law was at stake, was greedily sought. To pull down the eagles, to destroy the works of art erected by Herod, in which the Mosaic regulations were not always respected,‡ to rebel against the votive shields set up by the procurators, the inscriptions of which seemed tainted with idolatry,‖ were perpetual temptations to fanatics who had reached that degree of exaltation which takes away all desire of life. Judas, son of Saripheus, and Mathias, son of Margaloth, two very celebrated doctors of the law, formed thus a bold party of aggression against the established order, which continued after their execution.§ The Samaritans were agitated by similar movements.¶ It seems that the Law had never had more passionate partizans than at the moment when he already lived who, by the full authority of his genius and his great soul, was to abrogate it. The "Zelotes" (*Kenaim*) or "Sicarii," pious assassins who imposed upon themselves the task of killing whoever disobeyed the Law in their presence, began to appear.** Representatives of an entirely different spirit, thaumaturgists, considered as a species of divine persons, found credence, in consequence of

* Jos. *Ant.*, l. XVIII.
† *Ibid.*, books XVII and XVIII entire, and *B. J.*, books I and II.
‡ Jos. *Ant.*, XV, x. 4. Comp. Book of Enoch, xcvii, 13, 14.
‖ Philo, *Leg. ad Caium*, § 38.
§ Jos. *Ant.*, XV, vi, 2 seqq.; *B. J.*, I, xxxiii, 3 seqq.
¶ Jos., *Ant.*, XVIII, iv, 1 seqq.
** Mischna, *Sanhedrin*, ix, 6; John, xvi, 2; Jos., *B. J.*, book IV seqq.

the imperious necessity felt by the age for the supernatural and the divine.*

A movement which had much more influence upon Jesus was that of Juda the Gaulonite or the Galilean. Of all the obligations to which countries newly conquered by Rome were exposed, the assessment was the most unpopular.† This measure, which always astonishes nations little accustomed to the burdens of great central administrations, was particularly hateful to the Jews. Already under David we see a census provoke violent recriminations and the threats of the prophets.‡ The census, in fact, was the basis of the tax; now the tax, according to the ideas of the pure theocracy, was almost impious. God being the only master whom man should recognize, to pay tithes to a mundane sovereign, is in some sort to put him in the place of God. A complete stranger to the idea of the State, the Jewish theocracy in this, merely carried to its last result the negation of civil society and of all government. The money of the public treasury was considered to be stolen.§ The assessment ordered by Quirinius (A. D. 6) thoroughly awoke these ideas and caused great fermentation. A commotion broke out in the northern provinces. A certain Juda, of the town of Gamala, on the eastern shore of Lake Tiberias, and a Pharisee, named Sadok, gathered together, by denying the lawfulness of the tax, a numerous school, which soon came to open revolt.‖ The fundamental

* *Acts*, VIII, 9. Verse 11th implies that Simon the Magician was already celebrated in the time of Jesus.

† Discours de Claude, a Lyon, tab. II, sub fin. De Boissieu, *Inscr. ant. de Lyon*, p. 136.

‡ II Sam., XXIV.

§ Talmud de Bab., *Baba Kama*, 113 *a*; *Schabbath*, 33 *b*.

‖ Jos., *Ant.*, XVIII, I, 1, 6; *B. J.*, II, VIII, 1; *Acts*, V. 37. Before Juda the Gaulonite, the *Acts* place another agitator, Theudas; but that is an anachronism: the commotion of Theudas was A. D. 44 (Jos., *Ant.*, XX, V, 1).

maxims of the school were that no person should be called "master," that title belonging to God alone, and that liberty is better than life. Juda had undoubtedly many other principles which Josephus, always anxious not to compromise his co-religionists, intentionally passes over in silence; for we could not understand that for an idea so simple, the Jewish historian should give him a place among the philosophers of his nation, and regard him as the founder of a fourth school, parallel to those of the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes. Juda was evidently the chief of a Galilean sect, which was full of Messianism, and which ended in a political movement. The procurator Coponius crushed the sedition of the Gaulonite; but the school survived and preserved its leaders. Under the guidance of Menahem, the son of the founder, and of a certain Eleazar, his relative, we find it very active in the final struggles of the Jews against the Romans.* Jesus, perhaps, saw this Juda who had so different a conception of the Jewish revolution from his own; he knew his school, at all events, and it was probably through reaction against his mistake, that he pronounced the axiom in relation to the penny of Cæsar. The wise Jesus, far removed from all sedition, profited by the error of his precursor and looked to another kingdom and another deliverance.

Galilee was thus a vast caldron in which the most diverse elements were in ebullition.† An extraordinary contempt of life, or rather a species of appetite for death was the consequence of these commotions.‡ Ex-

* Jos., *B. J.*, II, XVII, 8 seqq.

† Luke, XIII, 1. The Galilean movement of Juda, son of Hezekiah, seems not to have had a religious character; perhaps, however, its character was concealed by Josephus (*Ant.*, XVII, X, 5).

‡ Jos., *Ant.*, XVI, VI, 2, 3; XVIII, I, 1.

perience counts for nothing in the grand movements of fanaticism. Algeria, in the early days of the French occupation, saw arise every spring inspired leaders, who declared that they were invulnerable and were sent by God to drive out the unbelievers; the next year their death was forgotten, and their successor found no weaker faith. Very severe in one respect, the Roman rule, little given to intermeddling as yet, permitted much liberty. These great brutal dominations, terrible in repression, were not suspicious like those powers which have a dogma to preserve. They let all things move on until they deemed the day come for rigorous action. In his wayfaring life, we do not see that Jesus was ever interfered with by the authorities. Such freedom and above all the good-fortune of Galilee in being much less closely bound in the bonds of Pharisaic pedantry, gave to that country a great superiority over Jerusalem. The revolution, or in other words Messianism, set all wits at work. They believed that they were on the eve of seeing the great renewal appear; Scripture tortured in various ways served to feed the most colossal expectations. In each line of the simple writings of the Old Testament they saw the assurance and in some sort the programme of the future reign which should bring peace to the just and seal forever the work of God.

At all times, this division into two parties, opposite in interest and in spirit, had been to the Hebraic nation an element of fruitfulness in the moral order. Every people called to high destinies must be a little world complete, containing within itself the opposite poles. Greece presented at a distance of few miles Sparta and Athens, the two antipodes to a superficial

observer, in reality rival sisters, each necessary to the other. It was the same with Judea. Less brilliant in one sense than the development of Jerusalem, that of the north was upon the whole much more fruitful; the most living works of the Jewish people had always come from thence. A complete absence of the sentiment of nature, resulting in something withered, narrow and fierce, stamped all works purely Hierosolymite with a character grandiose but sad, arid and repulsive. With its solemn doctors, its inspired canonists, its hypocritical and atrabiliary devotees, Jerusalem would not have conquered humanity. The north gave to the world the artless Shulamite, the humble Canaanite, the impassioned Magdalen, the good foster-father Joseph, the Virgin Mary. The north alone formed Christianity; Jerusalem, on the contrary, is the real country of that obstinate Judaism which, founded by the Pharisees and fixed by the Talmud, has crossed the middle ages and finally reached us.

A transporting nature contributed to form this spirit, so much less austere, less bitterly monotheistic, if I may use the word, which impressed upon all the dreams of Galilee an idyllic and charming character. The saddest country in the world is perhaps the region about Jerusalem. Galilee, on the contrary, was a country very green, and full of shade and pleasantness, the true country of the Canticle of canticles and of the songs of the well-beloved.* During the two

* Jos., *B. J.*, III, III, 1. The horrible condition to which this country is reduced, especially near Lake Tiberias, should not deceive us. This land, now burned over, was once a terrestrial paradise. The baths of Tiberias, to-day a hideous place, were formerly the finest spot in Galilee (Jos., *Ant.*, XVIII, II, 3). Josephus (*B. J.*, III, x, 8) praises the fine trees of the plain of Genesareth, where there is now not one. Antoninus Martyr, towards the year 600, fifty years before the Moslem invasion, finds Galilee still covered with delightful plantations, and compares its fertility to that of Egypt (*Itin.*, § 5).

months of March and April it is a dense mass of flowers of an incomparable freshness of colors. The animals are small but extremely gentle. Lively and graceful turtle-doves, blue-birds so slight that they alight upon a blade of grass without bending it, crested larks that come almost to the feet of the traveller, little brook turtles with quick, soft eyes, storks of grave and modest air, putting off all timidity, allow themselves to be approached very closely by man and seem to call him. In no place in the world do the mountains spread out with more harmony or inspire loftier ideas. Jesus seems to have loved them especi ally. The most important acts of his divine career were performed upon the mountains; there he was best inspired;* there he had secret conferences with the ancient prophets and showed himself to his disciples already transfigured.†

This goodly country, now become, in consequence of the enormous impoverishment which Islamism has effected in human life, so sad, so distressing, but where all that man could not destroy still breathes abandon, gentleness and tenderness, was overflowing in the time of Jesus with gayety and comfort. The Galileans were considered energetic, brave and laborious.‡ If we except Tiberias, built by Antipater in honor of Tiberius (towards the year 15) in the Roman style,‖ Galilee had no large cities. The country was nevertheless densely populated, covered with small towns and large villages, and carefully cultivated in every part.§ By the ruins which remain to us of its

* Matt., v, 1; xiv, 23; Luke, vi, 12.
† Matt., xvii, 1 seqq.; Mark, ix, 1 seqq.; Luke, ix, 28 seqq.
‡ Jos., *B. J.*, III, iii, 2. ‖ Jos., XVIII, ii, 2; *B J.*, II, ix, 1; *Vita*, 12, 13, 64
§ Jos., *B J.*, III, iii, 2.

ancient splendor, we perceive an agricultural people, with no endowments for art, careless of luxury, indifferent to the beauties of form and exclusively idealist. The country must have been delightful: it abounded in springs and fruits; the large manors were shadowed with vines and fig-trees; the gardens were clumps of lemon, pomegranate and orange trees.* The wine was delicious, if we may judge of it by that which the Jews still make at Safed, and it was much used.† This life, content and easily satisfied, did not lead to the stolid materialism of our peasantry, the coarse jovialty of abundant Normandy or the heavy gayety of the Belgians. It became spiritualized in ethereal dreams, in a sort of poetic mysticism confounding heaven and earth. Leave the austere John the Baptist to his desert of Judea to preach penitence, to cry without ceasing, to live on locusts in company with the jackals. Why should the companions of the bride-groom fast while the bride-groom is with them? Gladness shall make a portion of the kingdom of God. Is it not the daughter of the humble in heart, of the men of good will?

The whole history of the birth of Christianity thus became a delightful pastoral. A Messiah at wedding feasts, the harlot and the good Zaccheus invited to his feasts, the founders of the kingdom of heaven like a cortege of paranymphs: this is what Galilee dared, what she compelled the world to accept. Greece traced in sculpture and poetry charming pictures of

* We may judge by some enclosures in the environs of Nazareth. Cf. Antoninus Martyr *l. c.* The aspect of the great farms is still well preserved in the southern part of the country of Tyre (once the tribe of Asher). Traces of the ancient Palestinian agriculture, with its utensils cut in the rock (threshing-floors, wine-presses, corn-bins, troughs, mills, etc.), are met with also at every step.

† Matt., IX, 17; XI, 19; Mark, II, 22; Luke, V, 37; VII, 34; John, II, 3 seqq.

human life, but always without perspective or distant horizons. Here are no marble, no excellent workmen, no exquisite and refined language. But Galilee created upon the groundwork of popular imagination the most sublime ideal; for behind its idyl the fate of humanity is decided and the light which illumines its picture is the sun of the kingdom of God.

Jesus lived and grew in this intoxicating medium. From his childhood, he went to Jerusalem almost every year to the feasts.* The pilgrimage was to the provincial Jews a delightful custom. Whole series of psalms were devoted to celebrating the pleasure of these family journeys,† enduring several days, in spring, across hills and valleys, all having in prospect the splendors of Jerusalem, the terrors of the sacred courts, the pleasantness of brethren dwelling together.‡ The route which Jesus followed ordinarily in these journeys was that which is followed to-day, by Gmæa and Shechem.‖ From Shechem to Jerusalem it is very difficult. But the vicinity of the old sanctuaries of Shiloh and Bethel, near which the road passes, keeps the soul aroused. *Ain-el-Haramieh*, the last station,§ is a place of charming melancholy, and few impressions equal that experienced upon encamping there for the night. The valley is narrow and gloomy; a dark water oozes from the rocks pierced with sepulchres, which form its walls. It is, I think, the "Valley of tears," or of the dripping waters, cele-

* Luke, II, 41. † Luke, II, 42–44.

‡ See especially Psalms LXXXIV, CXXII and CXXIII (Vulg. LXXXVIII, CXXI and CXXXII).

‖ Luke, IX, 51–53; XVII, 11; John, IV, 4; Jos., *Ant.*, XX, VI, 1; *B. J.*, II, XII, 3 *Vita*, 52. Often, however, the pilgrims came by Perea to avoid Samaria where they incurred danger. Matt. XIX, 1; Mark, X, 1.

§ According to Josephus (*Vita*, 52), it was a three days' journey. But the days' journey from Shechem to Jerusalem had ordinarily to be cut in two.

brated as one of the stations by the way in that delightful psalm LXXXIV,* and become to the sadly sweet mysticism of the middle ages, the emblem of life. The next day in good time they will be at Jerusalem; such an expectation, even at this day sustains the caravan and renders the night short and sleep light.

These journeys, in which the united nation intercommunicated its ideas, and which were nearly always focuses of great agitation, put Jesus in contact with the soul of his people, and doubtless inspired in him a lively antipathy to the faults of the official representatives of Judaism. It is said that the desert soon became another school to him and that he made in it long sojourns.† But the God which he found there was not his own. It was at most the God of Job, severe and terrible, rendering an account to no man. Sometimes Satan came to tempt him. He returned then into his dear Galilee, and found again his heavenly Father, in the midst of the green hills, and the clear springs, among the flocks of children and women who, with joyful soul and the song of the angels in their hearts, were awaiting the salvation of Israel.

* LXXXIII according to the Vulgate, v. 7. † Luke, IV, 42; V, 16

CHAPTER V.

FIRST APHORISMS OF JESUS.—HIS IDEAS OF A FATHER GOD AND A PURE RELIGION.—FIRST DISCIPLES.

Joseph died before the public life of his son began. Mary thus remained the head of the family, and this explains why her son, when it was desired to distinguish him from the many others of the same name, was usually called the "son of Mary."* It seems that becoming by the death of her husband a stranger in Nazareth, she retired to Cana,† of which she may have been a native. Cana‡ was a small town eight or ten miles from Nazareth, at the foot of the mountains which limit on the north the plain of Asochis.§ The prospect, less grand than at Nazareth, extends over the whole plain and is closed most picturesquely by the mountains of Nazareth and the hills of Sephoris. Jesus appears to have made this place his residence for some time. There he probably passed a portion of his youth, and thence came his first splendors.

* This is the expression of Mark, vi, 3. Cf. Matt., xiii, 55 Mark does not know Joseph. John and Luke, on the contrary, prefer the expression "son of Joseph." Luke, iii, 23; iv, 22; John, i, 45; vi, 42.

† John, ii, 1; iv, 46. John alone is informed on this point.

‡ I accept as probable the opinion which identifies Cana of Galilee with *Kana el Jelil*. Arguments however can be made in favor of *Kefr-Kenna*, four or five miles north-northeast of Nazareth. ‖ Now *el-Buttauf*.

§ John, ii, 11; iv, 41. One or two of the disciples were from Cana. John, xvi, 2; Matt., x, 4; Mark, iii, 8.

He worked at the trade of his father, which was that of a carpenter.* This was no humiliating or unwelcome circumstance. The Jewish customs demanded that the man devoted to intellectual labors should understand some occupation. The most celebrated doctors had trades;† thus St. Paul, whose education had been so well cared for, was a tent-maker.‡ Jesus never married. All his power to love was transferred to what he considered his celestial vocation. The extremely delicate feeling which we notice in him towards women,‖ never departed from the exclusive devotion which he had to his idea. He treated as sisters, like Francis d'Assisi and Francis de Sales, those women who were enamoured with the same work as he; he had his St. Claires, his Francoises de Chantal. Only it is probable that they loved him more than the work; he was undoubtedly more loved than loving. As often happens in very lofty natures, tenderness of heart was in him transformed into infinite sweetness, vague poetry, universal charm. His relations, intimate and free, but of an entirely moral order, with women of equivocal conduct is explained also by the passion which attached him to the glory of his Father, and inspired in him a kind of jealousy of all beautiful creatures who might contribute to it.§

What was the progress of the mind of Jesus during this obscure period of his life? Through what meditations did he launch out into the prophetic career? We are ignorant, his history having come to us in the

* Mark, VI, 3; Justin, *Dial. cum Tryph.*, 88.
† For example, Rabbi Iohanan the Shoemaker, Rabbi Isaac the Blacksmith.
‡ *Acts*, XVIII, 3.
‖ See hereafter p. 157-158.
§ Luke, VII, 37 seqq.; John, IV, 7 seqq.; VIII, 3 seqq.

state of isolated stories and without exact chronology. But the development of living products is everywhere the same, and there can be no doubt that the growth of a personality as mighty as that of Jesus obeyed very rigid laws. A lofty idea of divinity, which he did not owe to Judaism and which seems to have been entirely the creation of his great soul, was the foundation of all his power. Here it is that we must most of all renounce those ideas with which we are familiar and those discussions in which small minds wear themselves away. Properly to understand the degree of the piety of Jesus, we must rid ourselves of all that has intruded itself between the Gospel and ourselves. Deism and paganism have become the two poles of theology. The paltry discussion of scholasticisms, the aridity of soul of Descartes, the thorough irreligion of the eighteenth century, by diminishing God and in some sort limiting him by the exclusion of all that is not him, stifled in the breast of modern rationalism every fruitful feeling of divinity. If God is, indeed, a determinate being without us, the person who believes that he has private relations with God is a "visionary," and as the physical and physiological sciences have shown us that every supernatural vision is an illusion, the deist who is at all consistent finds himself beyond the possibility of comprehending the great beliefs of the past. Pantheism on the other hand, by denying the divine personality, is as far as possible from the living God of the ancient religions. Were the men who have most loftily comprehended God, Sakya-Mouni, Plato, St. Paul, St. Francis d'Assisi and St. Augustine at some moments of his changeful life, deists or pantheists? Such a question has no meaning.

The physical and metaphysical proofs of the existence of God to them would have had no interest. They felt the divine within themselves. In the first rank of this grand family of the true sons of God, we must place Jesus. Jesus has no visions; God does not speak to him from without; God is in him; he feels that he is with God, and he draws from his heart what he says of his Father. He lives in the bosom of God by uninterrupted communication; he does not see him, but he understands him without need of thunder and burning bush like Moses, of a revealing tempest like Job, of an oracle like the old Greek sages, of a familiar genius like Socrates, or of an angel Gabriel like Mahomet. The imagination and hallucination of a St. Theresa, for example, here go for nothing. The intoxication of the Soufi proclaiming himself identical with God is also an entirely different thing. Jesus never for a moment enounces the sacrilegious idea that he is God. He believes that he is in direct communion with God; he believes himself the son of God. The highest consciousness of God which ever existed in the breast of humanity was that of Jesus.

It is clear, on the other hand, that Jesus, setting out with such proclivity of soul, will be in no wise a speculative philosopher like Sakya-Mouni. Nothing is further from scholastic theology than the gospel.* The speculations of the Greek Fathers in regard to the divine essence come from an entirely different spirit. God conceived immediately as Father, this is the

* The discourses which the fourth gospel attributes to Jesus already contain a germ of theology. But these discourses being in contradiction with those of the synoptic gospels, which represent without any doubt the primitive *Logia*, they should be considered as elements of apostolic history, and not as material for the life of Jesus.

whole theology of Jesus. And that was not with him a theoretical principle, a doctrine more or less proven, and which he sought to inculcate. He used no argument with his disciples;* he exacted from them no effort of attention. He did not preach his opinions, he preached himself. Oftentimes the greatest and most disinterested souls present, associated with a high degree of elevation, this peculiarity of perpetual attention to themselves and extreme personal susceptibility, which in general is peculiar to women.† Their persuasion that God is within them and is perpetually caring for them, is so strong that they have no fear of imposing themselves upon others; with our reserve, our respect for the opinion of others, which is a portion of our weakness, they have nothing to do. This exalted personality is not egotism; for such men, possessed by their idea, gladly give their life to seal their work; it is the identification of the me with the object which it has embraced, carried to its last extent. It is pride to those who see in it only the personal fantasy of the founder; it is the finger of God to those who see the result. The fool here almost touches the inspired man; only the fool never succeeds. Hitherto it has never been given to aberration of mind to produce a serious effect upon the progress of humanity.

Jesus undoubtedly did not at once reach this lofty affirmation of himself. But it is probable that from the very first he looked to God in the relation of a son to a father. This is his great act of originality; in this he is in no wise of his race.‡ Neither the Jew nor

* See Matt., IX, 9, and the other analogous accounts.

† See, for example, John, XXI, 15 seqq.

‡ The beautiful soul of Philo met here, as on so many other points, with that of Jesus. *De confus. ling.*, § 14; *De Migr. Abr.*, § 1; *De somniis*, II, § 41; *De agric. Noe*, § 12; *De mutatione nominum*, § 4. But Philo has hardly a Jewish mind.

the Moslem have learned this delightful theology of love. The God of Jesus is not the hateful master who kills us when he pleases, damns us when he pleases, saves us when he pleases. The God of Jesus is Our Father. We hear him when we listen to a low whisper within us which says, "Father."* The God of Jesus is not the partial despot who has chosen Israel for his people and protects it in the face of all and against all. He is the God of humanity. Jesus will not be a patriot like the Maccabees, or a theocrat like Juda the Gaulonite. Rising boldly above the prejudices of his nation, he will establish the universal fatherhood of God. The Gaulonite maintained that men should die rather than give to another than God the name of "master;" Jesus leaves this name to whoever chooses to take it, and reserves for God a gentler title. According to the mighty ones of the earth, to him the representatives of force, a respect full of irony, he founds the supreme consolation, the recourse to the Father which each one has in heaven, the true kingdom of God which each one bears in his heart.

This name of "kingdom of God" or "kingdom of heaven"† was the favorite term of Jesus to express the revolution which he brought into this world.‡ Like nearly all the Messianic terms, it came from the Book of Daniel. According to the author of this extraordinary book, to the four profane empires, destined to be destroyed, will succeed a fifth empire, which will

* Gal., iv, 6.

† The word "heaven" in the rabbinic language of this period, is synonymous with the name of "God," which they avoided saying. Comp. Matt., xxi, 25, Luke, xv, 18; xx, 4.

‡ This expression recurs on every page of the synoptic evangelists, of the Acts of the Apostles, and of St. Paul. If it appears but once in St. John, (iii, 3 and 5), it is because the discourses reported by the fourth evangelist are far from representing the real words of Jesus.

be that of the saints and which will endure forever.* This reign of God upon the earth naturally received the most diverse interpretations. In the Jewish theology, the "kingdom of God" is usually nothing but Judaism itself, the true religion, the monotheistic worship, piety.† During the latter portion of his life, Jesus believed that this reign was to be realized materially by a speedy renewal of the world. But this undoubtedly was not his first thought.‡ The admirable moral which he draws from the idea of this father God is not that of enthusiasts who believe the world near its end, and who are preparing by ascetism for a chimerical catastrophe; it is that of a world which desires to live and which has lived. "The kingdom of God is within you," said he to those who subtly asked for external signs.‖ The material conception of the divine advent was only a cloud, a passing error which death consigned to oblivion. The Jesus who founded the real kingdom of God, the kingdom of the meek and lowly, this is the Jesus of the earlier days,§ days chaste and without alloy, when the voice of his Father resounded in his heart with a purer tone. There were then some months, perhaps a year, during which God really lived upon the earth. The voice of the young carpenter suddenly assumed extraordinary sweetness. Infinite charm exhaled from his person, and the companions of his youth no longer recognized him.¶

* Dan., II, 44; VII, 13, 14, 22, 27.

† Mischna. *Berakoth*, II, 1, 3; Talmud of Jerus., *Berakoth*, II, 2; *Kiddouschin*, 1, 2 Talmud of Bab., *Berakoth*, 15 *a*; *Mekilta*, 42 *b*; Siphra, 170 *b*. The expression occurs often in the *Midraschim*.

‡ Matt., VI, 33; XII, 28; XIX, 12; Mark, XII, 34; Luke, XII, 31.

‖ Luke, XVII. 20–21.

§ The grand theory of the apocalypse of the Son of man is in fact reserved, in the synoptics, until the chapter preceding the story of the passion. The first teachings especially in Matthew are entirely moral.

¶ Matt., XIII, 54 seqq.; Mark, VI, 2 seqq.; John, VI, 42.

He had yet no disciples, and the throng which pressed around him was neither a sect nor a school; but they felt already a common spirit, something gentle and penetrating. His lovely character, and doubtless one of those transporting countenances* which sometimes appear in the Jewish race, created around him a circle of fascination which hardly any, among this friendly and artless people, could resist.

Paradise had been, indeed, transported upon earth, had not the ideas of the young master too widely overstepped the level of common goodness, above which the human race has hitherto been incapable of being elevated. The brotherhood of men, sons of God, and the moral consequences which result from this, were deduced with an exquisite sentiment. Like all the rabbis of the time, Jesus, little given to consecutive reasonings, compressed his doctrine into aphorisms concise and of an expressive form, sometimes strange and enigmatical.† Some of these maxims come from the books of the Old Testament. Others were the thoughts of more modern sages, especially of Antigonus of Soco, Jesus, the son of Sirach, and Hillel, which were known to him, not through learned studies, but as proverbs often repeated. The synagogues were rich in maxims very happily expressed, which formed a sort of current proverb literature.‡ Jesus adopted nearly all this oral instruction, infusing into it a loftier meaning.‖ Increasing ordinarily upon the duties de-

* The tradition of the ugliness of Jesus (Justin, *Dial. cum Tryph.*, 85, 88, 100) comes from the desire to find realized in him a pretended Messianic trait (Isaiah LIII, 2).

† The *Logia* of St. Matthew piece together many of these axioms, to make grand discourses. But the fragmentary form is perceptible in the seams.

‡ The sentences of learned Jews of the time are collected in the little book entitled: *Pirke Aboth.*

‖ The comparisons will be made hereafter as they present themselves. It is

clared by the Law and the elders, he demanded perfection. All the virtues of humility, of forgiveness, of charity, of abnegation, of severity to self, virtues which are rightly named Christian, if by that is meant that they were really preached by Christ, were in germ in these first teachings. For justice, he contented himself with repeating the well known axiom, "Do not to others that which ye would not that they should do unto you."* But this ancient wisdom, which was still somewhat selfish, was not enough for him. He went far beyond:

"Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also."†

"If thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee."‡

"Love your enemies; do good to them that hate you; pray for them that persecute you."‖

"Judge not that ye be not judged.§ Forgive and ye shall be forgiven.¶ Be ye merciful as your Father in heaven is merciful.** It is more blessed to give than to receive."††

sometimes supposed that the compilation of the Talmud being posterior to that of the Gospels, appropriations might have been made by the Jewish compilers from the Christian morality. But that is inadmissible; there was a wall of separation between the church and the synagogue. Christian literature and Jewish literature had before the XIIIth century, scarcely any influence upon each other.

* Matt. VII, 12; Luke, VI, 31. This axiom was already in the book of Tobit, IV, 16. Hillel made use of it habitually (Talm. of Bab., *Schabbath*, 31 *a*), and declared like Jesus that it was the epitome of the Law.

† Matt., V, 39 seqq.; Luke, VI, 29. Comp. Jeremiah, III, 30.

‡ Matt., V, 29–30; XVIII, 9; Mark, IX, 46.

‖ Matt., V, 44; Luke, VI, 27 Comp. Talm. of Bab. *Schabbath*, 88 *b*; *Joma*, 23 *a*.

§ Matt., VII, 1; Luke, VI, 37. Comp. Talm. of Bab. *Kethuboth*, 105 *b*.

¶ Luke, VI, 37. Comp. *Levit.*, XIX, 18; *Prov.*, XX, 22; *Ecclesiastes*, XXVIII, 1 seqq.

** Luke, VI, 36; Siphre, 51 *b* (Sultzbach, 1802)

†† A saying reported in the Acts, XX, 35.

"Whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."*

Concerning alms, pity, good works, gentleness, the desire of peace, complete disinterestedness of heart, he had little to add to the doctrines of the synagogue.† But he gave to them an accent full of unction, which made new aphorisms uttered long before. Morality is not composed of principles more or less well expressed. The poetry of the precept, which makes it lovely, is more than the precept itself, taken as an abstract verity. Now, it cannot be denied that the maxims borrowed by Jesus from his predecessors, produce, in the gospel, an effect totally different from that in the ancient Law, in the *Pirke Aboth*, or in the Talmud. It is not the ancient Law, it is not the Talmud, which has conquered and changed the world. Little original in itself, if by that is meant that it can be recomposed almost entirely with more ancient maxims, the evangelical morality remains none the less the highest creation which has emanated from the human conscience, the most beautiful code of perfect life that any moralist has traced.

He did not speak against the Mosaic law, but it is clear that he saw its insufficiency, and allowed it to be understood. He constantly repeated that it was necessary to do more than the ancient sages had said.‡ He prohibited the least harsh word;‖ he forbade divorce§ and all oaths;¶ he blamed retaliation;** he

* Matt., xxiii, 12; Luke xiv, 11; xviii, 14. The sayings reported by St. Jerome from the "Gospel according to the Hebrews" (Comment in *Epist. ad Ephes.*, v, 4; in Ezek., xviii, Dial. adv. Pelag., iii, 2), are marked by the same spirit.

† *Deut.*, xxiv, xxv, xxvi, etc.; Is., lviii, 7; *Prov.*, xix, 17; *Pirke Aboth*, i; Talmud of Jerusalem, *Peah*, i, 1; Talmud of Babylon, *Schabbath*, 63 *a*.

‡ Matt., v, 20 seqq.

‖ Matt., v, 22.

§ Matt., v, 31 seqq. Compare Talm. of Bab., *Sanhedrin*, 22 *a*.

¶ Matt., v, 33 seqq.

** Matt., v, 38 seqq.

condemned usury;* he declared voluptuous desire as criminal as adultery.† He desired universal forgiveness of injuries.‡ The motive with which he enforced these maxims of lofty charity was always the same:— "That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good. If ye love," added he, "them only which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what is that? do not the heathen the same? Be ye perfect, as your Father in heaven is perfect."‖

A pure worship, a religion without priests and without external practices, reposing entirely upon the feelings of the heart, upon the imitation of God,§ upon the immediate communion of the conscience with the heavenly Father, were the result of these principles. Jesus never recoiled before that bold deduction which made of him, in the bosom of Judaism, a revolutionist of the highest stamp. Wherefore mediators between man and his Father? God seeing only the heart, of what use these purifications, these rites, which reach only the body?¶ Tradition itself, a thing so holy to the Jew, is nothing compared with pure feeling.** The hypocrisy of the Pharisees, who in praying turned their heads to see if anyone were looking, who gave their alms with ostentation, and put upon their dress signs which made them known as pious persons, all these affectations of false devotion were revolting to

* Matt., v, 42. The Law forbade it also (*Deut.*, xv, 7–8), but less formally, and usage authorised it (Luke, vii, 41 seqq.).
† Matt., xxvii, 28. Compare Talmud, *Masseket-Kalla* (edit. Furth, 1793), fol. 34 *b*.
‡ Matt., v, 23 seqq. ‖ Matt., v, 45 seqq. Compare *Lev.*, xi, 44.
§ Compare Philo. *De migr. Abr.*, § 23 and 24; *De vita contemplativa*, entire.
¶ Matt., xv, 11 seqq.; Mark, vii, 6 seqq. ** Mark, vii, 6 seqq.

him.* "They have their reward," said he; "but when thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth; that thine alms may be in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret, himself shall reward thee openly. And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues, and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily, I say unto you, they have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him."†

He affected no external sign of asceticism, contenting himself with praying or rather meditating upon the mountains and in solitary places, where man has always sought God.‡ This lofty idea of the communion of man with God, of which so few souls, even after him, were to be capable, was condensed into a prayer, which he thenceforth taught to his disciples:‖

"Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who have trespassed against us. Lead us not in

* Matt., VI, 1 seqq. Compare *Ecclesiastes*, XVII, 18; XXIX, 15; Talm. of Bab., *Chagiga*, 5 *a*; *Baba Bathra* 9 *b*.

† Matt., VI, 2–8 ‡ Matt., XIV, 23; Luke, IV, 42, V, 16; VI, 12.

‖ Matt., VI, 9 seqq.; Luke XI, 2 seqq.

to temptation; but deliver us from the Evil One."* He insisted particularly upon this idea that our heavenly Father knows better than we what we need, and that we almost insult him in asking for a definite thing.†

Jesus, in this, did nothing more than to deduce the consequences of the great principles which Judaism had established, but which the official classes of the nation tended more and more to disown. The Greek and Roman prayer was almost always a mass of verbiage full of egotism. Never had pagan priest said to the faithful: "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift."‡ Alone in antiquity, the Jewish prophets, Isaiah especially, in their antipathy to the priesthood, had seen the true nature of the worship which man owes to God. "To what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices? I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; incense is an abomination unto me; for your hands are full of blood. Make clean your thoughts; cease to do evil; learn to do well; seek justice, and come then."‖ In the latter days, some teachers, Simeon the Just,§ Jesus, son of Sirach,¶ and Hillel,** almost reached the goal, and declared that the sum of the Law was justice. Philo, in the Judaic-Egyptian world, attained at the same time with Jesus to ideas of a high moral

* That is to say from the devil. † Luke, xi, 5 seqq. ‡ Matt., v 23–24.
‖ Isaiah, i, 11 seqq. Compare *ibid.*, lviii entire; Hosea, vi, 6; Malachi, i, 10 seqq.
§ *Pirke Aboth*, i, 2. ¶ *Ecclesiastes*, xxxv, 1 seqq.
** Talm. of Jerus., *Pesachim*, vi, 1; Talm of Bab., same treatise, 66 *a*; *Schabbath*, 31 *a*.

holiness, the consequence of which was little regard for the rites of the Law.* Schemaïa and Abtalion, more than once, showed that they also were very liberal casuists.† Rabbi Iohanan soon came to place works of mercy above even the study of the Law.‡ Jesus alone, nevertheless, said it in an effective manner. Never was any man less a priest than Jesus, never more an enemy of the forms which stifle religion under the pretext of preserving it. By that, we are all his disciples and his continuators; by that he has laid an eternal rock, the corner-stone of true religion, and, if religion be the one thing needful to humanity, by that he has earned the divine rank which has been assigned to him. An idea absolutely new, the idea of a worship founded upon purity of heart and human fraternity, made through him its entrance into the world, an idea so elevated that the Christian church was upon this point completely to betray his intentions, and that, in our days, but few souls are capable of comprehending it.

An exquisite perception of nature furnished him at all times with expressive images. Sometimes a remarkable penetration, what we call genius, set off his aphorisms; at others, their vivid form was due to the happy employment of popular proverbs. "How canst thou say to thy brother, 'Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye;' and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye."‖

* *Quod Deus immut.*, § 1 and 2; *De Abrahamo*, § 22; *Quis rerum divin. hæres*, § 13 seqq.; 55, 58 seqq; *De profugis*, § 7 and 8; *Quod omnis probus liber*, entire; *De vita contemplativa*, entire.

† Talm. de Bab., *Pesachim*, 67 *b*. ‡ Talmud of Jerusalem, *Peah*, I, 1.

‖ Matt., VII, 4-5. Compare Talmud of Babylon, *Baba Bathra*, 15 *b*; *Erachin*, 16 *b*

These lessons, long time shut up in the heart of the young master, had gathered already a few converts. The spirit of the day was towards small churches; it was the time of the Essenes or Therapeutes. Rabbis, each with his doctrine, Schemaïa, Abtalion, Hillel, Schammai, Juda the Gaulonite, Gamaliel, and many others, of whose maxims the Talmud * is composed, appeared on all sides. They wrote very little. The Jewish teachers of that day did not make books; everything passed in conversation and in public lessons, to which they sought to give a character easy of retention.† On the day when the young carpenter of Nazareth began to produce in public these maxims, for the most part already known, but which, thanks to him, were to regenerate the world, it was not, then, an event. It was one rabbi the more (true, the most charming of all), and around him a few young men eager to hear him and seeking the unknown. Time is required to compel the attention of men. There were yet no Christians; true Christianity, nevertheless, was founded, and never doubtless was it more perfect than at this first moment. Jesus will add to it nothing more that will be durable. What do I say? In one sense, he will compromise it; for every idea in order to succeed, must needs make sacrifices; none comes immaculate out of the struggle of life.

To conceive the truth, indeed, is not enough; it is needful to give it success among men. For that, ways less pure are necessary. Indeed, were the gospel confined to a few chapters of Matthew and Luke, it would be more perfect, and would not now give rise to so

* See especially *Pirke Aboth*, ch. I.

† The Talmud, a summary of this vast movement of the schools, hardly began to be written until the second century of our era.

many objections; but without miracles would it have converted the world? Had Jesus died at the period which we have reached in his career, there would have been in his life no page which wounds us; but, grander in the eyes of God, he would have remained unknown of men; he would be lost in the multitude of great unknown souls, the best of all; the truth would not have been promulgated, and the world had not profited by the immense moral superiority which his Father had imparted to him. Jesus, son of Sirach, and Hillel had enunciated aphorisms almost as lofty as those of Jesus. Hillel, however, will never be considered the real founder of Christianity. In morality, as in art, words are nothing, deeds are everything. The idea which is concealed beneath a picture of Raphael is a small thing; it is the picture alone that counts. Likewise, in morality, truth becomes of value only if it pass to the condition of feeling, and it attains all its preciousness only when it is realized in the world as a fact. Men of indifferent morals have written very good maxims. Men very virtuous, also, have done nothing to continue the tradition of their virtue in the world. The palm belongs to him who has been mighty in word and in work, who has felt the truth, and, at the price of his blood, has made it triumph. Jesus, from this double point of view, is without equal; his glory remains complete, and will be renewed forever.

CHAPTER VI.

JOHN THE BAPTIST.—JOURNEY OF JESUS TO JOHN AND HIS SOJOURN IN THE DESERT OF JUDEA.—ADOPTS THE BAPTISM OF JOHN.

An extraordinary man, whose work, in the absence of documents, remains to us in part enigmatical, appeared about this time and certainly had relations with Jesus. These relations rather tended to make the young prophet of Nazareth deviate from his way; but they suggested to him many important accessories of his religious institution, and at all events, they furnished his disciples with a very strong authority to recommend their master in the eyes of a certain class of Jews.

Towards the year 28 of our era (the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius), there passed through Palestine, the fame of a certain Iohanan or John, a young ascetic full of ardor and of passion. John was of priestly race,* born probably, at Jutta near Hebron or at Hebron itself.† Hebron, beyond all others the patri-

*Luke, I, 5; a passage of the Gospel of the Ebionim preserved by Epiphanius (*Adv. hær*, XXX, 13).

† Luke, I, 39. It has been proposed with some veri-similitude, to regard "the city of Juda" named in this passage of Luke the city of *Jutta* (Joshua, XV, 55 XXI, 16. Robinson (*Biblical Researches*, I, 494; II, 206) found this *Jutta* still bearing the same name, six or eight miles south of Hebron.

archal city, situated on the borders of the desert of Judea, and within a few hours' travel of the great desert of Arabia, was at that time what it is to-day, one of the bulwarks of the Semitic spirit in its most austere form. From his infancy John was *Nazir*, that is to say devoted by vow to certain abstinences.* The desert by which he was, as it were, environed, soon attracted him.† He led in it the life of an Indian *yogui*, clad in skins or in stuff of camel's hair and having no food but locusts and wild honey.‡ A certain number of disciples were gathered about him, sharing his life and meditating upon his severe words. One might have believed himself transported to the banks of the Ganges, if certain peculiar traits had not revealed in this recluse, the last descendant of the greatest prophet of Israel.

Since the Jewish nation had been seized by a species of despair in reflecting upon its destiny, the imagination of the people had turned again with much comfort towards the ancient prophets. Now, of all the personages of the past, whose memory came like the dreams of a troubled night to arouse and agitate the people, the grandest was Elias. This giant of the prophets, in his rugged solitude of Carmel, sharing the life of wild beasts, living in the caves of the rocks, whence he emerged like a thunderbolt to make and unmake kings, had become by successive transformations a superhuman being, sometimes visible, sometimes invisible, who had not tasted death. It was generally believed that Elias was to come and restore Israel.‖

* Luke, I, 15. † Luke, I, 80.

‡ Matt., III, 4; Mark, I, 6; fragm. of the gospel of the Ebionim in Epiph., *Adv. Hær.*, XXX, 13.

‖ Malachi, III, 23–24 (IV, 5–6 according to the Vulgate); *Ecclesiastes*, XLVIII, 10 Matt., XVI, 14; XVII, 10 seqq; Mark, VI, 15; VIII, 28; IX, 10 seqq.; Luke, IX, 8, 19; John, I, 21, 25.

The austere life which he had led, the terrible mementos that he had left, under the impression of which the East yet lives,* that gloomy image which, even in our days, causes trembling and destruction; all this mythology full of vengance and terrors, produced a vivid and striking impression upon all minds, and placed, in some sort, a birth-mark upon all the products of the throes of the people. Whoever aspired to a great deed among the people must imitate Elias, and as solitary life had been the essential peculiarity of this prophet, the masses had become accustomed to look upon "the man of God" as a hermit. They imagined that all the holy personages had their days of penitence, of severe life, and of austerities.† The retreat to the desert became thus the condition and the prelude of high destinies.

Doubtless this thought of imitation had greatly occupied John.‡ Anchoretic life, so opposite to the spirit of the ancient Jewish people, and with which vows of the kind taken by the Nazirs and the Rechabites had nothing in common, invaded Judea on all sides. The Essenes or Therapeutes were established near the country of John, upon the eastern borders of the Dead Sea.‖ It was readily conceived that the leaders of sects must be recluses, having their peculiar rules and their institutes, like the founders of religious orders. The masters of the youth were also at times a species of anchorites§ closely resembling the *gourous*¶ of Brah-

* The ferocious Abdallah, Pasha of St. Jean d'Acre, thought to have died of fright from having seen him standing erect on the mountain. In the pictures of the Christian churches, he is seen surrounded with cut-off heads. The Moslems fear him.

† *Ascension d'Isaie*, II, 9–11.

‡ Luke, I, 17

‖ Pliny *Nat. Hist.*, V, 17; Epiph., *Adv hær.* XIX, 1 and 2.

§ Josephus, *Vita*, 2.

¶ Spiritual preceptors.

minism. Indeed was there not in this a remote influence of the *mounis* of India? Had not some of the wandering Buddhist monks, who overran the world, as, at a later period did the first Franciscans, preaching by their edifying exterior life and converting people who did not know their language, turned their steps in the direction of Judea, as they certainly had in that of Syria and of Babylon?* We know not. Babylon had become some time previously a true focus of Buddhism; Boudasp (Bodhisattva) was reputed a Chaldean sage and the founder of Sabianism. And what was *Sabianism*? What its etymology indicates:† *baptism* itself, that is, the religion of frequent baptism, the foundation of the sect still in existence, which is called Christians of St. John or Mendaites, and which the Arabs call *el-Mogtasila*,‡ "the baptists." It is very difficult to follow out these vague analogies. The sects floating between Judaism, Christianity, Baptism and Sabianism which we find in the region beyond Jordan during the first centuries of our era,‖ present to the critic, from the confusion of the accounts which have come to us, the most singular problem. We may believe, in any event, that many of the external practices of John, of the Essenes§ and of the Jewish spiritual preceptors of the time, came from a recent in-

* I have developed this point elsewhere (*Hist. gener. des langues semitiques*, III, IV, 1; *Journ. Asiat.*, fevrier–mars 1856.

† The Aramæan verb *Seba*, origin of the name Sabians, is synonymous with $\beta\alpha\pi\tau\iota\zeta\omega$.

‡ I have treated of this at greater length in the *Journal Asiatique* nov.–dec. 1853 et aout–sept. 1855. It is remarkable that the Elchasaites, a sabian or baptist sect, inhabit the same country as the Essenes (the eastern border of the Dead Sea) and were confounded with them (Epiph., *Adv. hær.*, XIX, 1, 2, 4; XXX, 16, 17; I, III, 1 and 2; *Philosophumena*, IX, III, 15 and 16; X, XX, 2[9])

‖ See the accounts of Epiphanius of the Essenes, the Hemero-baptists, the Nazarenes, the Ossenes, the Nazerenes, the Ebionites, the Sampsenes (*Adv. hær.*, books I and II) and those of the author of the *Philosophumena* of the Elchasaites (books IX and X).

§ Epiph., *Adv. hær.*, XIX, XXX, LIII.

fluence of the upper East. The fundamental rite which characterized the sect of John, and which gave him his name, has always had its center in Lower Chaldæa, and there constitutes a religion which has been perpetuated to our day.

That rite was baptism or total immersion. Ablutions were already familiar to the Jews, as they were to all the religions of the East.* The Essenes had given them a special diffusion.† Baptism had become an ordinary ceremony on the introduction of proselytes into the bosom of the Jewish religion, a sort of initiation.‡ Never, however, before our Baptist had any one given to immersion this importance or this form. John had established the theatre of his work in that portion of the desert of Judea which lies near the Dead Sea.‖ At the periods when he administered baptism, he went to the borders of the Jordan,§ either at Bethany or Bethabara,¶ on the eastern bank, probably opposite Jericho, or at the place called *Ænon* or "the Fountains"** near Salim, where there was much water.†† Thither, large numbers, especially of the tribe of Judah,

* Mark, VII, 4; Jos., *Ant.*, XVIII, v, 2; Justin, *Dial. cum Tryph.*, 17, 29, 80; Epiph., *Adv. hær.*, XVII. † Jos., *B. J.*, II, VIII, 5, 7, 9, 13.

‡ Mischna, *Pesachim*, VIII, 8; Talm. of Bab., *Jebamoth*, 46 *b*; *Kerithuth*, 9 *a*; *Aboda Zara*, 57 *a*; *Masseket Gerim* (edit. Kirchheim, 1851), p. 38–40.

‖ Matt., III, 1; Mark, I, 4. § Luke, III, 3.

¶ John, I, 28; III, 26. All the manuscripts have *Bethany;* but, as no Bethany is known in these parts, Origen (*Comment. in Joann.*, VI, 24) proposes to substitute *Bethabara*, and his correction has been very generally accepted. The two words are, moreover, of analogous signification, and seem to indicate a place where there was a ferry-boat to cross the river.

** 'Ænon is the Chaldaic plural of *Ænawan*, "fountains."

†† John, III, 23. The situation of this place is doubtful. The circumstance related by this Evangelist leads to the belief that it was not very near the Jordan. Yet the synoptics are constant in placing all the scenes of John's baptisms upon the banks of this river (Matt., III, 6; Mark, I, 5; Luke, III, 3). The comparison of verses 22 and 23 of the IIIrd chap. of John, and verses 3 and 4 of the IVth chap. of the same Evangelist, favors the belief that Salim was in Judea, and consequently in the oasis of Jericho, near the mouth of the Jordan, since there can hardly be found in the rest of the territory of the tribe of Judea a single natural basin which would allow the total immersion of the whole person. Saint Jerome thought Salim much farther north, near Beth-Schean or Scythopolis. But Robinson (*Bibl. Res.*, III, 303) could find nothing on the spot to justify this allegation.

thronged to him and were baptized.* In a few months he thus became one of the most influential men in Judea, and all had to do with him.

The people regarded him as a prophet,† and many imagined that he was Elias alive again.‡ The belief in such resurrections, was wide spread;‖ it was thought that God would raise from their tombs some of the ancient prophets to serve as guides in conducting Israel towards its final destiny.§ Others held John to be the Messiah himself, although he made no such claim.¶ The priests and the scribes, opposed to this revival of prophecy, and always inimical to enthusiasts, despised him. But the popularity of the Baptist awed them and they dared not speak against him.** It was a victory of popular opinion over the aristocratic priesthood. When the chief priests were compelled to explain themselves clearly upon this point, it greatly embarassed them.†† Baptism was however to John only a sign intended to make an impression and to prepare minds for some great movement. Doubtless he was possessed in the highest degree with the expectation of the Messiah, and his principal action was directed by this. "Repent ye said he, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."‡‡ He announced a "wrath" that is to say, terrible catastrophes which were to come,‖‖ and declared that the ax was already laid unto the root of the tree and that the tree would be soon cast into the fire. He represented his Messiah fan in hand, gathering the good grain and burning the chaff. Repentance, of which baptism

* Mark, I, 5; Jos., *Ant.*, XVIII, v, 2.
‡ Matt., XI, 14; Mark, VI, 15; John, I, 21.
§ See above, p. 118, note ‖.
** Matt., XXI, 25 seqq.; Luke, VII, 30.
‡‡ Matt., III, 2.
† Matt., XIV, 5; XXI, 26.
‖ Matt., XIV, 2; Luke, IX, 8.
¶ Luke, III, 15 seqq.; John, I, 20.
†† Matt., *loc. cit.*
‖‖ Matt., III, 7.

was a symbol, charity, the amendment of morals,* were to John the great means of preparation for approaching events. The exact date which he fixed for the occurrence of these events is not known. So much is certain, however, that he preached with much force against the same adversaries as Jesus, against the rich priests, the Pharisees, the doctors, official Judaism, in a word, and that, like Jesus, he was accepted readily by the despised classes.† He reduced to nothing the title of children of Abraham, and said that God could create children of Abraham out of the stones of the highway.‡ It does not seem that he possessed, even in germ, the grand idea which constituted the triumph of Jesus, the idea of a pure religion; but he was of great service to that in substituting a private rite for the ceremonies of the law to which the priests were essential, much as the Flaggellants of the middle ages were the precursors of the Reformation, by taking away the monopoly of sacraments and of absolution from the official clergy. The general tone of his sermons was harsh and severe. The expressions which he used against his adversaries appear to have been of the most violent character.‖ They were rude and incessant invective. It is probable that he did not remain aloof from politics. Josephus, who almost touched him through his master Banou, hints this in hidden phrase,§ and the catastrophe which put an end to his days seems to suppose it.

* Luke, III, 11–14; Jos., *Ant.*, XVIII, v, 2. † Matt., XXI, 32; Luke, III. 12–14
‡ Matt., III. 9. ‖ Matt., III, 7; Luke, III, 7.
§ *Ant.*, XVIII, v, 2. It should be observed that when Josephus exposes the secret doctrines, more or less seditious, of his compatriots, he effaces everything which indicates the Messianic belief, and covers over these doctrines, so as not to give umbrage to the Romans, with a varnish of generality which makes the chiefs of the Jewish sects resemble professors of moral philosophy or stoics.

His disciples led a very austere life,* fasting frequently and affecting a sad and anxious appearance. At times the existence of a community of goods is perceptible and the idea that the rich man is obliged to share that which he has.† The poor appear already as those who should be beneficiaries in the first rank of the kingdom of God.

Although the central point of John's action was in Judea, his fame soon penetrated into Galilee and reached Jesus, who had already formed about him by his first discourses a small circle of hearers. Enjoying as yet little authority and doubtless desirous also to see a master whose teachings had so much in common with his own ideas, Jesus left Galilee and went with his little school to visit John.‡ The new comers were baptized like every body else. John cordially welcomed this swarm of Galilean disciples, and was not displeased that they should remain distinct from his own. The two masters were young; they had many common ideas; they loved each other and labored before the public with reciprocal good-will. Such a state of things surprises us at the first thought in regard to John the Baptist, and we are tempted to doubt it. Humility has never been the characteristic of strong souls among the Jews. It seems as though

* Matt., IX, 14. † Luke, III, 11.

‡ Matt., III, 13 seqq.; Mark, I, 9 seqq.; Luke, III, 21 seqq.; John, I, 29 seqq.; III, 22 seqq. The synoptics make Jesus come to John before his public life commences. But if it is true as they say, that John recognized Jesus at once, and gave him a great welcome, we must suppose that Jesus was already a master of some renown. The fourth Evangelist takes Jesus twice to John, once privately, a second time with a troop of disciples. Without touching here upon the question of the precise journeys of Jesus (a question which cannot be resolved in view of the contradictions of the documents, and the little care of the evangelists to be exact in such matters), without denying that Jesus might have made a journey to John at a time when he was unknown, we adopt the datum furnished by the fourth evangelist (III, 22 seqq.) to wit, that Jesus before he was baptized by John had a school formed. We must remember, moreover, that the first pages of the fourth evangelist are notes put together without rigorous chronological order.

a character so inflexible, a sort of constantly irritated Lamennais, would be very passionate and suffer neither rivalry nor partial adhesion. But this idea is based upon a false conception of the person of John. He is represented as an old man; he was, on the contrary, of the same age as Jesus,* and very young according to the notions of the times. He was not, in the order of mind, the father of Jesus, but only his brother. The two young enthusiasts, full of the same hopes and the same hates, might well make common cause and reciprocally support each other. Certainly an old master seeing a man without celebrity come to him and manifest airs of independence, would have revolted at it; there is hardly an example of the head of a school welcoming with cordiality him who was to succeed him. But youth is capable of all abnegations, and we may believe that John, having recognized in Jesus a spirit kindred to his own, accepted him without selfish considerations. These pleasant relations became thenceforth the starting-point of the whole system developed by the evangelist, which consists in giving as the first basis of the divine mission of Jesus, the attestation of John. Such was the degree of authority achieved by the Baptist that they thought no better voucher could be found in the world. But far from the Baptist abdicating before Jesus, Jesus, during the whole time that he spent with him, recognized him as his superior, and developed his own genius but timidly.

It seems, indeed, that notwithstanding his profound originality, Jesus, during some weeks at least, was the imitator of John. His path was yet obscure before

* Luke, 1, although all the details of the story, especially that which concerns the relationship of John with Jesus, are legendary.

him. At all epochs, moreover, Jesus yielded much to opinion, and even adopted things which were not in his direction, or for which he had little regard, for the sole reason that they were popular; only, these accessories were never injurious to his principal idea and were always subordinate to it. Baptism had been brought by John into great favor; he thought himself obliged to do likewise; he baptized and his disciples baptized also.* Undoubtedly they accompanied the baptism by sermons similar to those of John. The Jordan was thus covered on all sides with Baptists, whose discourses met with greater or less success. The pupil soon equaled the master, and his baptism was much sought. There was on this subject jealousy among the disciples;† the disciples of John came and complained to him of the growing success of the young Galilean, whose baptism would soon, according to them, supplant his own. But the two masters were superior to these pettinesses. The superiority of John was, moreover, too incompatible for Jesus, as yet little known, to think of combatting it. He desired only to grow beneath his shadow, and thought himself obliged, in order to win the multitude, to employ the external means which had secured to John such astonishing success. When he began to preach after the arrest of John, the first words which are put into his mouth are only a repetition of one of the familiar phrases of the Baptist.‡ Many other expressions of John are repeated literally in his discourses.‖ The two schools appear to have lived a long time with a good mutual understanding§, and after the death of John,

* John, III, 22-26; IV, 1-2. The parenthesis of verse 2 seems to be a comment added, or perhaps a tardy scruple of John correcting himself.

† John, III, 26; IV, 1.

‡ Matt., III, 2; IV, 17.

‖ Matt., III. 7; XII, 34; XXIII, 33.

§ Matt., XI, 2-13.

Jesus, as his trusted brother, was one of the first to be informed of the event.*

John, indeed, was very soon checked in his prophetic career. Like the ancient Jewish prophets, he was, in the highest degree, a railer at the established powers.† The extreme freedom with which he expressed himself in their regard could not fail to create embarrassment to him. In Judea, John does not appear to have been disturbed by Pilate; but in Perea, beyond the Jordan, he was upon the territory of Antipater. This tyrant was disquieted by the ill-dissembled political leaven of the preaching of John. The great gatherings of men created by religious and patriotic enthusiasm around the Baptist, were something suspicious.‡ A grievance entirely personal came, moreover, in addition to these motives of state, to seal the doom of the austere censor.

One of the most strongly marked characters of that tragic family of Herods, was Herodias, granddaughter of Herod the Great. Violent, ambitious, and passionate, she detested Judaism and despised its laws.‖ She had been married, probably against her will, to her uncle Herod,§ son of Mariamne, whom Herod the Great had disinherited,¶ and who had never been a public character. The inferior position of her husband, compared with the other persons of his family, gave her no rest; she would be a sovereign at any price.** Antipater was the instrument which she used. That feeble man, having become distractedly enamoured of

* Matt., XIV, 12. † Luke, III, 19.
‡ Jos., *Ant.*, XVIII, v, 2. ‖ Jos., *Ant.*, XVIII, v, 4.
§ Matthew (XIV, 3, in the Greek text) and Mark (VI, 17) prefer Philip; but this is certainly an inadvertence (see Josephus, *Ant.*, XVIII, v, 1 and 4.) The wife of Philip was Salome, daughter of Herodias.
¶ Jos., *Ant.*, XVII, IV, 2. ** Jos., *Ant.*, XVIII, VII, 1, 2; *B. J.*, II IX, 6.

her, promised to espouse her and repudiate his first wife, the daughter of Hareth, King of Petra and Emir of the neighboring tribes of Perea. The Arab princess, having discovered the project, resolved to fly. Dissembling her design, she feigned a desire to visit Machero, upon the territory of her father, and was conducted thither by the officers of Antipater.* Makaur,† or Machero, was a colossal fortress, built by Alexander Jannæus, since rebuilt by Herod, in one of the most abrupt wadys on the east of the Dead Sea.‡ It was a wild region, strange, filled with fantastical legends, and was believed to be the haunt of demons.‖ The fortress was just on the line between the territories of Hareth and Antipater. It was now in the possession of Hareth.§ He had been forewarned, and had prepared everything for his daughter's flight, who, from tribe to tribe, was taken back to Petra.

The almost incestuous¶ union of Antipater and Herodias was then accomplished. The Jewish laws upon marriage were an incessant source of scandal between the irreligious family of the Herods and the strict Jews.** The members of that numerous and rather isolated dynasty were reduced to the necessity of inter-marriage and frequent violations of the impediments prescribed by the Law were the result. John was the echo of the general opinion in his energetic blame of Antipater.†† This was more than enough to decide Antipater to act upon his suspicions. He caused the

* Jos., *Ant.*, XVIII, v, 1.

† This form is found in the Talmud of Jerusalem (*Schebitt*, IX, 2) and in th Targums of Jonathan and of Jerusalem (*Numbers*, XXII, 35).

‡ To-day Mkaur, in the wady Zerka Main. This place has not been visited since Seetzen.

‖ Jos., *De bell. Jud.*, VII, VI, 1 seqq.

§ Jos., *Ant.*, XVIII, v, 1.

¶ *Lev.*, XVIII, 16

** Jos., *Ant.*, XV, VII, 10.

†† Matt., XIV, 4; Mark, VI, 18; Luke, III, 19

Baptist to be arrested, and ordered that he be confined in the fortress of Machero, which he had probably seized after the departure of the daughter of Hareth.*

Timid, rather than cruel, Antipater did not wish to put him to death. According to some reports, he feared a popular tumult.† According to another version,‡ he took pleasure in listening to the prisoner, and these conversations filled him with the greatest perplexity. So much is certain, that the detention of John was prolonged, and that he continued to exert from the depths of his prison a wide-spread influence. He corresponded with his disciples, and we shall again find him in communication with Jesus. His faith in the near approach of Messiah became stronger than ever; he followed attentively all movements without, and sought to discover in them signs favorable to the accomplishment of the hopes which supported him.

* Jos., *Ant.*, XVIII, v, 2. † Matt., xiv, 5.
‡ Mark, vi, 20. I read ἠπόρει and not ἐποίει.

CHAPTER VII.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE IDEAS OF JESUS CONCERNING THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

Up to the arrest of John, which we place proximately in the summer of the year 29, Jesus did not leave the vicinity of the Dead Sea and the Jordan. A sojourn in the desert of Judea was generally considered the preparation for great deeds, a sort of "retreat" before public acts. Jesus followed in this the example of others, and passed forty days, with no company but the wild beasts, keeping a rigorous fast. The imagination of his disciples was much exercised concerning this sojourn. The desert was, in the popular belief, the abode of demons.* There are few regions in the world more desolate, more God-forsaken, more closed against life than the stony slope which forms the western border of the Dead Sea. It was believed that during the time which he passed in this hideous country, he suffered terrible temptations, that Satan had endeavored to terrify him with his illusions or cajole him with seductive promises, and that then the angels had come to serve him as a reward for his victory.†

* *Tobit*, VIII, 3; Luke, XI, 24.

† Matt., IV, 1 seqq.; Mark, I, 12-13; Luke, IV, 1 seqq. Certainly the striking analogy which these stories present to the analogous legends of the *Vendidad*

It was probably on coming forth from the desert that Jesus was apprised of the arrest of John the Baptist. He had no further reason for a prolonged sojourn in a country in which he was almost a stranger. Perhaps he feared that he might be comprehended in the severities exercised in regard to John, and preferred not to expose himself at a time when, in view of the small celebrity which he had obtained, his death would not serve the progress of his ideas. He returned to Galilee,* his true country, matured by an important experience and having developed in contact with a great man, very different from himself, the feeling of his originality. On the whole, the influence of John had been more injurious than useful to Jesus. It was a check in his developement; everything goes to show that when he descended to the Jordan his ideas were superior to those of John, and that it was by a species of concession that he inclined for a moment towards baptism. Perhaps if the Baptist, from whose authority he could with difficulty have withdrawn himself, had been left in freedom, he would not have been able to throw off the yoke of rites and of external practices, and in that case he would undoubtedly have remained an unknown Jewish sectary; for the world would not have abandoned one set of rites for another. Through the attraction of a religion disengaged from all external forms it is that Christianity has enchanted lofty souls. The Baptist once imprisoned, his school was greatly diminished, and Jesus was re-

(farg. XIX) and to the *Lalitavistara* (ch. XVII, XVIII, XXI) would indicate that they are myths only. But the meagre and concise recital of Mark, who here represents evidently the original compilation, implies a real occurrence which has since furnished the theme of legendary developments.

* Matt., IV, 12; Mark, I, 14; Luke, IV, 14; John, IV, 3.

stored to his own work. The only thing which he owed to John, was, to a certain extent, lessons in preaching and in popular agitation. From this time in fact, he preached with much more force and impressed himself upon the multitude with authority.*

It seems also that his sojourn with John, less by the action of the Baptist than by the natural progress of his own thought, greatly matured his ideas upon "the kingdom of heaven." His watch-word thenceforth is "good tidings," the announcement that the kingdom of God is at hand.† Jesus will no longer be a delightful moralist, aspiring to concentrate sublime lessons in a few brief and living aphorisms; he is the transcendant revolutionist, who essays to renew the world from its deepest foundations, and to establish upon earth the ideal which he has conceived. "To await the kingdom of God," will be synonymous with being a disciple of Jesus.‖ The words "kingdom of God" or "kingdom of heaven," as we have already said,‡ had long been familiar to the Jews. But Jesus gave them a moral sense, a social bearing, at which even the author of the Book of Daniel, in his apocalyptic enthusiasm, hardly dared to glance.

In the world as it is, it is evil which reigns, Satan is the "prince of this world,"§ and all obey him. The kings slay the prophets. The priests and the doctors do not that which they command others to do. The just are persecuted, and the peculiar portion of the good is to weep. The "world" is thus the enemy of God and his saints.¶ The day is at hand; for the

* Matt., VII, 29; Mark, I, 22; Luke, IV, 32.
† Mark, I, 14-15.
‡ Mark, XV, 43.
‖ See above, p. 106-107.
§ John, XII, 31; XIV, 30; XVI, 11. Compare II *Cor.*, IV, 4. *Ephes.*, II, 2.
¶ John, I, 10; VII, 7; XIV, 17, 22, 27; XV, 18 seqq.; XVI, 8, 30, 33; XVII, 9, 14, 16, 25. This meaning of the word "world" especially characterises the writings of Paul and John.

abomination is at its height. The reign of good shall have its turn.

The coming of this reign of good will be a grand and sudden revolution. The world will seem to be overturned; the present state of things being bad, in order to represent the future it sufficed to imagine nearly the contrary of every thing in existence. The first shall be last.* A new order shall govern humanity. Now good and evil are mixed like tares and good grain in the field. The master permits them to grow together; but the hour of violent separation will come.† The kingdom of God will be like a great cast of the net, which gathers good and bad fish; the good are placed in vessels, and the rest are cast away.‡ The germ of this grand revolution will be at first unrecognizable. It will be like a grain of mustard seed, which is the least of seeds, but which, cast into the earth, becomes a tree in the branches of which the birds come and lodge;‖ or again it will be like the leaven which, put into the dough, ferments the entire mass.§ A series of parables, often obscure, was designed to express the surprises of this sudden advent, its apparent injustice, its inevitable and definitive character.¶

Who will establish this reign of God? Let us remember that the first idea of Jesus, an idea so deep in him that it probably had no origin, but inhered in the very roots of his being, was that he was the son of God, the intimate of his Father, the executor of his will. The response of Jesus to such a question

* Matt., xix, 30; xx, 16; Mark, x, 31; Luke, xiii, 30.
† Matt., xiii, 47 seqq
‡ Matt., xiii, 24 seqq
‖ Matt., xiii, 31 seqq.; Mark, iv, 31 seqq.; Luke, xiii, 19 seqq.
§ Matt., xiii, 33; Luke, xiii, 21.
¶ Matt., xiii entire; xviii, 23 seqq.; xx, 1 seqq.; Luke, xiii, 18 seqq.

could not therefore be doubtful. The conviction that he was to bring about the reign of God took absolute possession of his soul. He looked upon himself as the universal reformer. The heavens, the earth, all nature, madness, disease and death are only instruments to him. In his paroxysm of heroic will, he believes himself all powerful. If the earth does not yield to this supreme transformation, the earth will be ground to powder, purified by fire and the breath of God.* A new heaven will be created, and the whole world will be peopled by the angels of God.

A radical revolution,† embracing even nature itself, such, then, was the fundamental idea of Jesus. Thenceforth, doubtless, he renounced politics; the example of Juda the Gaulonite had shown him the inutility of popular seditions. He never dreamed of revolt against the Romans or the tetrarchs. The unbridled and anarchical principle of the Gaulonite was not his. His submission to the established powers, derisive in reality, was complete in appearance. He paid tribute to Cæsar in order not to cause scandal. Liberty and right are not of this world; wherefore trouble his life with idle susceptibilities? Despising the earth, convinced that the present world does not merit his care, he took refuge in his ideal kingdom; he founded this grand doctrine of transcendant disdain,‡ the true doctrine of the liberty of souls, which alone gives peace. But he had not yet said: "My kingdom is not of this world." Gloomy thoughts were also mingled with his justest views. At times strange temptations crossed

* Matt., xxii, 30.
† Ἀποκατάστασις πάντων. *Acts*, iii, 21.
‡ Matt., xvii, 23-26; xxii, 16-22.

his spirit. In the desert of Judea, Satan had offered him the kingdoms of the earth. Not knowing the power of the Roman Empire, he might, upon the deep basis of enthusiasm which existed in Judea and which resulted soon after in such terrible military resistance, he might, I say, have hoped to found a kingdom by the boldness and the number of his partisans. Many times perhaps this supreme question was presented to him, Shall the kingdom of God be realized by force or by gentleness, by revolt or by patience? One day, it is said, the simple people of Galilee wished to take him and make him a king.* Jesus fled into the mountain and remained there some time alone. His beautiful nature preserved him from the mistake which would have made him an agitator or a rebel chief, a Theudas or a Barkokeba.

The revolution which he desired to bring about was always a moral revolution; but he was not yet ready to rely for its execution upon the angels and the final trump. It was upon men and by men themselves that he desired to act. A visionary who had no other idea than the proximity of the last judgment would not have had this care for the amelioration of man, and would never have founded the most beautiful moral teaching that humanity has received. Much uncertainty remained doubtless in his thought, and a noble sentiment, rather than a fixed design, urged him to the sublime work which has been realized by him, although in a manner far different from that which he imagined.

It is indeed the kingdom of God, or rather the kingdom of the spirit, which he founded, and if

* John, vi, 15.

Jesus, from the bosom of his Father, sees his work fructifying in history, he can well say with truth: "Lo! that which I desired." What Jesus has established, what will remain eternally his, aside from the imperfections which mingle with everything realized by humanity, is the doctrine of the liberty of souls. Already Greece had presented upon this subject fine ideas.* Many stoics had found means of being free under a tyrant. But, in general, the ancient world had imagined liberty as connected with certain political forms; the liberals were called Harmodius and Aristogiton, Brutus and Cassius. The true Christian is far more free from every chain; he is here below an exile; what to him is the temporary master of this earth which is not his home? Liberty for him is truth.† Jesus did not know enough of history to comprehend how exactly such a doctrine filled the need of the time just when republican liberty was ending, and the small municipal constitutions of antiquity were expiring in the unity of the Roman empire. But his admirable good sense and the truly prophetic instinct which he had of his mission, guided him here with marvelous safety. By this expression: "Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's and to God the things are God's," he has created something beyond politics, a refuge for souls in the midst of the empire of brutal force. Assuredly such a doctrine had its dangers. To establish in principle that the sign by which to recognize the legitimate power is to look at a coin, to proclaim that the perfect man pays his tax disdainfully and without discussion, was to destroy the

* V. Stobæus, *Florilegium*, ch. LXII, LXXVII, LXXXVI seqq.
† John, VIII, 32 seqq.

republic in its ancient form and to favor all tyrannies. Christianity, in this sense, has largely contributed to weaken the sentiment of duty among citizens and to deliver the world over to the absolute power of accomplished facts. But in constituting an immense free association which, for three hundred years, had nothing to do with politics, Christianity amply compensated for the injury which it inflicted upon the civic virtues. The power of the state was limited to the things of earth, the soul was enfranchised, or at least the terrible fasces of Roman omnipotence were broken forever.

The man who is entirely absorbed in the duties of public life never pardons those who put anything above the struggles of party. He especially blames those who subordinate political to social questions, and profess for the former a species of indifference. In one sense he is right, for every exclusive direction is prejudicial to the good government of human affairs. But what progress in the general morality of the race have parties produced? Had Jesus, instead of founding his heavenly kingdom, gone to Rome, worn himself out in conspiring against Tiberius, or bewailing Germanicus, what would have become of the world? As an austere republican, a zealous patriot, he would not have stopped the grand tide of affairs in his century, while in declaring politics insignificant, he revealed to the world the truth that country is not everything, and that the man is anterior and superior to the citizen.

Our principles of positive science are offended by the fancies which are included in the programme of Jesus. We know the history of the earth; cosmical revolutions of the kind which Jesus expected, are pro-

duced only by geological or astronomical causes, the connection of which with moral powers has never been established. But, to be just towards great creators, we must not pause at the prejudices which they may have shared. Columbus discovered America in consequence of very erroneous ideas; Newton thought his crazy exposition of the Apocalypse as certain as his system of the world. Do we rank any average man of our time above a Francis d'Assisi, a Saint Bernard, a Joan of Arc, or a Luther, because he is free from the errors which they believed? Would we measure men by the correctness of their ideas in Physics, and their more or less exact knowledge of the true system of the world? Let us comprehend better the position of Jesus and the nature of his power. The deism of the XVIIIth century and a certain kind of Protestantism have accustomed us to consider the founder of the Christian faith only as a great moralist, a benefactor of humanity. We no longer see in the Gospel anything more than good maxims; we cast a prudent vail over the strange intellectual condition into which he was born. There are people who regret also that the French Revolution was in many things a departure from principles, and that it had not been conducted by wise and moderate men. Let us not impose our petty programmes of common-sense respectability upon these extraordinary movements so far above our pitch. Let us continue to admire the "morality of the Gospel;" let us suppress in our religious instructions the chimera which was its soul; but let us not believe that with simple ideas of happiness or of individual morality the world can be moved. The idea of Jesus was far more profound; it was the most revolutionary idea

which was ever evolved from a human brain; it must be taken in its completeness, and not with those timid suppressions which rob it precisely of that which has rendered it efficacious for the regeneration of humanity.

At bottom, the ideal is always a utopia. To-day, when we desire to represent the Christ of the modern conscience, the consoler, the judge of the new epoch, what is it that we do? What Jesus himself did 1830 years ago. We suppose the conditions of the real world totally different from what they are; we represent a moral liberator breaking without weapons the chains of the negro, ameliorating the condition of the poor, delivering oppressed nations. We forget that this supposes the world reversed, the climate of Virginia and that of Congo modified, the blood and the race of millions of men changed, our social complications reduced to a chimerical simplicity, the political stratifications of Europe thrown out of their natural order. The "restitution of all things"* desired by Jesus, was not more difficult. That new earth, that new heaven, that new Jerusalem which descends from heaven, that cry, "Behold, I make all things new!"† are the common characteristics of reformers. Forever will the contrast of the ideal with the sad reality produce in humanity those revolts against cold reason, which common minds call madness, until the day of their triumph, when those who have combatted them are the first to acknowledge their lofty wisdom.

That there was a contradiction between the belief in the speedy destruction of the world and the habitual moral philosophy of Jesus, conceived in view of a stable condition of humanity, broadly analogous to that

* *Acts*, III, 21. † *Rev.*, XXI, 1, 2, 5.

which now exists, none will attempt to deny.* It was just this contradiction which assured the success of his work. The millennarian alone would have possessed no power. The millennarianism gave the impulsion, the morality secured the future. In this way, Christianity united the two conditions of great success in this world, a revolutionary starting-point, and the possibility of life. Everything which is made to succeed, must respond to these two needs; for the world demands at the same time to change and to endure. Jesus, while he announced an unparalleled revolution in human affairs, proclaimed the principles upon which society has reposed for the last eighteen hundred years.

That which indeed distinguishes Jesus from the agitators of his time and from those of all ages, is his perfect idealism. Jesus, in some respects, is an anarchist, for he has no idea of civil government. This government seems to him purely and simply an abuse. He speaks of it in vague terms, and like a man of the people who had no idea of polity. Every magistrate appears to him the natural enemy of the men of God; he announces to his disciples contests with the authorities, without dreaming for a moment that they might give cause for shame.† But never does the temptation to substitute himself for the powerful and the rich appear in him. He desired to annihilate riches and power, but not to seize them. He predicts to his disciples persecutions and punishments;‡ but he did not once permit himself to entertain the thought of armed

* The millennarian sects of England present the same contrast, I mean the belief in a speedy destruction of the world, and nevertheless much good sense in the practicalities of life,—an extraordinary attention to commercial and industrial affairs.

† Matt., x, 17-18: Luke, xii, 11.

‡ Matt., v, 10 seqq.; x entire; Luke, vi, 22 seqq.; John, xv, 18 seqq.; xvi, 2 seqq., 20, 33; xvii, 14.

resistance. The idea of omnipotence through suffering and resignation, of triumphing over force by purity of heart, is indeed an idea peculiar to Jesus. Jesus was not a spiritualist, for everything to him resulted in a palpable realization; he has not the least notion of a soul separate from the body. But he is a perfect idealist, the material to him being only the sign of the idea, and the real, the living expression of that which does not appear.

To whom should he address himself, upon whom rely to found the kingdom of God? The mind of Jesus in this never hesitated. What is high to men is an abomination in the eyes of God.* The founders of the kingdom of God shall be the simple. No rich, no doctors, no priests; women, men of the people, the humble, the little ones.† The great sign of the Messiah is "the gospel preached to the poor."‡ The gentle and idyllic nature of Jesus here resumes the ascendant. An immense social revolution in which ranks shall be inverted, in which all that is authoritative in this world shall be humbled, such is his dream. The world will not believe him; the world will kill him. But his disciples will not be of the world.‖ They will be a little flock of the humble and the simple, who will conquer by their very humility. The sentiment which has made of "worldling" the antithesis of "Christian," has in the thoughts of the master its complete justification.§

* Luke, xvi, 15

† Matt., v, 3, 10; xviii, 3; xix, 14, 23-24; xxi, 31; xxii, 2 seqq., Mark, x, 14-15 23-25; Luke, iv, 18 seqq.; vi, 20; xviii, 16-17; 24-25.

‡ Matt., xi, 5.

‖ John, xv, 19; xvii, 14, 16.

§ See especially the seventeenth chapter of St. John, expressing, if not a real discourse delivered by Jesus, at least a feeling which was very deep among his disciples, and which certainly came from him.

CHAPTER VIII.

JESUS AT CAPERNAUM.

Possessed by an idea more and more imperious and exclusive, Jesus will henceforth advance with a kind of impassible fatality along the path which his astonishing genius and the extraordinary circumstances in which he lived had marked out for him. Thus far he had communicated his thoughts only to a few persons attracted to him privately; henceforth his teaching becomes public and popular. He was scarcely thirty years of age.* The little group of hearers who had accompanied him to John the Baptist had doubtless increased, and perhaps some of John's disciples had joined him.† It is with this first nucleus of a Church that he boldly announces, on his return into Galilee, the "good tidings of the kingdom of God." That kingdom was at hand, and he, Jesus, was that "Son of man" whom the prophet Daniel had perceived in his vision as the divine executor of the final and supreme revelation.

We must remember that, in the ideas of the Jews, antipathetic to art and mythology, the simple form of man was superior to that of the *cherubs*, and the fan-

* Luke, III, 23; gospel of the Ebionim, in Epiph., *Adv. hær.*, XXX, 13.
† John, I, 37 seqq.

tastic animals, which the imagination of the people, since it had been subjected to the influence of Assyria, supposed to be ranged around the divine Majesty. Already in Ezekiel,* the being seated upon the supreme throne, far above the monsters of the mysterious chariot, the great revelator of the prophetic visions has the likeness of a man. In the Book of Daniel, in the midst of the vision of empires represented by animals, just as the sitting of the great judgment commences and the books are opened, a being "like the son of man" advances towards the Ancient of days, who confers on him the power to judge the world, and to govern it forever.† *Son of man* is in the Semitic languages, especially in the Aramæan dialects, simply a synonym of *man*. But this great passage of Daniel struck the imagination; the word *son of man* became, at least in certain schools,‡ one of the titles of the Messiah portrayed as the judge of the world and as king of the new era which was about to open.‖ The application which Jesus made of it to himself was therefore the proclamation of his Messiahship and the declaration of the speedy catastrophe in which he was to appear as judge, clothed with the full powers which had been delegated to him by the Ancient of days.§

The success of the preaching of the new prophet was now decided. A group of men and women, all characterized by a common spirit of youthful candor and artless innocence, adhered to him and said: "Thou

* I, 5, 26 seqq. † Daniel, VII, 13-14. Comp. VIII, 15; X, 16.

‡ In John, XII, 34, the Jews do not seem to be aware of this sense of the word.

‖ Book of Enoch, XLVI, 1, 2, 3; XLVIII, 2, 3; LXII, 9, 14; LXX, 1 (division of Dillman); Matt., X, 23; XIII, 41; XVI, 27-28; XIX, 28; XXIV, 27, 30, 37, 39, 44; XXV, 31, XXVI, 64; Mark, XIII, 26; XIV, 62; Luke, XII, 40; XVII, 24, 26, 30; XXI, 27, 36; XXII, 69; *Acts*, VII, 55. But the most significant passage is John v. 27, compared with *Rev.*, I, 13; XIV, 14. The expression "Son of woman" for the Messiah is found once in the Book of Enoch, LXII, 5.

§ John, V, 22, 27.

art the Messiah." As the Messiah must be the son of David, they naturally gave him that title, which was a synonym of the first. Jesus permitted it to be given him with pleasure, although it caused him some embarrassment, his birth being well known. For his own part, the title which he preferred was that of "Son of man," a title apparently humble, but one which attached itself directly to the expectations of a Messiah. It is by this expression that he designates himself,* so much so that in his mouth "the Son of man" was synonymous with the pronoun "I" which he avoided using. But he is never thus addressed, doubtless because the name in question could be fully accorded to him only at the period of his second coming.

The center of activity of Jesus, at this epoch of his life, was the little city of Capernaum, situated upon the border of the Lake of Gennesareth. The name of Capernaum into the composition of which enters the word *caphar*, "village," seems to designate a small straggling town of the ancient style, in opposition to the great cities built according to the Roman fashion, like Tiberias.† This name was so little known, that Josephus in one passage of his writings,‡ took it for the name of a fountain, the fountain being more celebrated than the village which was situated near it. Like Nazareth, Capernaum had no history, and had in nowise participated in the unhallowed progress favored by the Herods. Jesus attached himself very closely to this town and made it a second home.‖ Soon af

* This title occurs eighty-three times in the Gospels, and always in the discourses of Jesus.

† It is true that Tell-Hum, which is ordinarily identified with Capernaum, offers ruins of very fine monuments. But, besides that the identification is doubtful, these monuments appear to be of the second and third centuries after Christ.

‡ *B. J.*, III, x 8.

‖ Matt., IX, 1· Mark, II, 1.

ter his return, he had made an effort at Nazareth which was unsuccessful.* He could there do no mighty work, according to the naive remark of one of his biographers.† The acquaintance of the Nazarenes with his family, which was of little note, was too injurious to his authority. They could not regard as the son of David one whose brother, sister and brother-in-law they saw every day. It is remarkable, moreover, that his family made strenuous opposition to him, and flatly refused to believe in his mission.‡ The citizens, far more violent, desired, it is said, to kill him by casting him headlong from a steep cliff.‖ Jesus aptly remarked that this experience was the common lot of all great men, and applied to himself the proverb: "No man is a prophet in his own country."

This failure was far from discouraging him. He returned to Capernaum,§ where he organized a series of visits to the little villages around. The people of that beautiful and fertile country were scarcely ever united except on Saturday. He chose this day for his teachings. Each village had then its synagogue or place of meeting. This was a rectangular hall, rather small, with a portico, decorated with the Grecian orders. The Jews having no distinctive architecture, had never attempted to give to their edifices an original style. The ruins of many ancient synagogues still exist in Galilee.¶ They are all constructed of large and good materials; but their style is very mean on account of

* Matt., XIII, 54 seqq; Mark, VI, 1 seqq.; Luke, IV, 16 seqq.; 23-24; John, IV, 44.
† Mark, VI, 5. Comp. Matt., XII, 58; Luke, IV, 23.
‡ Matt., XIII, 57; Mark, VI, 4; John, VII, 3 seqq.
‖ Luke, IV, 29. Probably reference is here made to the precipitous rock quite near Nazareth, above the present church of the Maronites, and not to the pretended *Mount of Precipitation*, at an hour's distance from Nazareth. See Robinson, II, 335 seqq.
§ Matt., IV, 13; Luke, IV, 31.
¶ At Tell-Hum, at Irbid (Arbela), at Meiron (Mero), at Jisch (Giscala), at Kasyoun, at Nabartein, and two at Kefr-Bereim.

that profusion of vegetable ornaments, of foliage and of twists which characterizes Jewish monuments.* In the interior, there were benches, a chair for the public reading, a closet to keep the sacred scrolls.† These edifices, which had nothing in common with the temple, were the center of all the Jewish life. The people assembled there on the Sabbath day for prayer and the reading of the Law and the Prophets. As Judaism, out of Jerusalem, had no clergy proper, any person arose, read the lessons of the day (*parascha* and *haphtara*), and added to this a *midrasch* or commentary, entirely personal, in which he set forth his peculiar ideas.‡ This was the origin of the "homily," of which we find the complete model in the small treatises of Philo. Any one had the right to make objections and to question the reader; so the congregation soon degenerated into a sort of free assembly. It had a president,‖ "elders,"§ a *hazzan*, appointed reader or beadle,¶ "envoys,"** a species of secretaries or messengers who carried on the correspondence between one synagogue and another, and a *schammasch* or sacristan.†† The synagogues were thus in fact little

* I dare not yet pronounce upon the age of these monuments, nor consequently affirm that Jesus taught in any of them. What interest would not be attached to the synagogue of Tell Hum on such an hypothesis! The great synagogue of Kefr-Bereim seems to me the oldest of all. It is quite pure in its style. That of Kasyoun bears a Greek inscription of the time of Septimus Severus. The great importance which Judaism assumed in Upper Galilee after the Roman war leads us to believe that many of these edifices date back only to the third century, when Tiberias became the capital of Judaism.

† II *Esdr.*, VIII, 4; Matt., XXIII, 6; Jas., II, 3; Mischna, *Megilla*, III, 1; *Rosch hasschana* V, 7, etc. See especially the curious description of the synagogue of Alexandria in the Babylonish Talmud, *Sukka*, 51, *b*.

‡ Philo, cited in Eusebius, *Præp. evang.*, VIII, 7; and *Quod omnis probus liber*, § 12 Luke, IV, 16; *Acts*, XIII, 15; XV, 21; Mischna, *Megilla*, III, 4 seqq.

‖ Ἀρχισυνάγωγος.

§ Πρεσβύτεροι.

¶ Ὑπηρέτης.

** Ἀπόστολοι or ἄγγελοι.

†† Διάκονος. Mark, V, 22, 35 seqq.; Luke, IV, 20; VII, 3; VIII, 41, 49; XIII, 14 *Acts*, XIII, 15; XVIII, 8, 17; *Rev.*, II, 1, Mischna, *Joma*, VII, 1; *Rosch hasschana*, IV, 9; Talm. Jerus., *Sanhedrin*, I, 7; Epiph., *Adv. hær.*, XXX, 4. 11.

independent republics; they had an extended jurisdiction. Like all municipal corporations up to an advanced period of the Roman Empire, they made honorary decrees,* adopted resolutions having the force of law over the community, pronounced sentence for penal offences, the executor of which was ordinarily the *hazzan*.†

With the extreme activity of mind which always characterized the Jews, such an institution, notwithstanding the arbitrary severities which it permitted, could not fail to occasion very animated discussions. Thanks to the synagogues, Judaism has been able to preserve itself intact through eighteen centuries of persecution. They were so many little worlds apart, in which the national spirit was preserved, and which offered to intestine struggle a field ready prepared. There was expended an enormous amount of passion. Disputes of precedence were intense among them. To have a seat of honor in the first row was the recompense of a lofty piety, or the privilege of the rich which was most envied.‡ On the other hand, the liberty, accorded to whomsoever chose to take it, of constituting himself the reader and commentator of the sacred text, gave wonderful facilities for the propagation of new ideas. This was one of the great opportunities of Jesus and the means which he employed most habitually to establish his doctrinal teaching.‖ He entered the synagogue, and rose to read; the *haz-*

* Inscription of Berenice, in the *Corpus inscr. græc.*, No. 5361; inscription of Kasyoun, in the *Mission de Phenicie*, book IV [in press].

† Matt., v, 25; x, 17; xxiii, 34; Mark, xiii, 9; Luke, xii, 11, xxi, 12; *Acts*, xxii, 19, xxvi, 11; II Cor., xi, 24; Mischna, *Maccoth*, iii, 12; Talm. de Bab., *Megilla*, 7 *b* Epiph., *Adv. hær*, xxx, 11.

‡ Matt., xxiii, 6; James, ii, 3; Talm. Bab., *Sukka*, 51, *b*.

‖ Matt., iv, 23; ix, 35; Mark, i, 21, 39; vi, 2; Luke, iv, 15, 16, 31, 44; xiii, 10; John, xviii, 20.

zan handed him the book, he unrolled it, and reading the *parascha* or the *haphtara* of the day, drew from that lesson some development conformable to his ideas.* As there were few Pharisees in Galilee, the discussion against him did not assume that degree of intensity and that acrimonious tone which, at Jerusalem, would have stopped him short at the first step. The good Galileans had never heard discourse so adapted to their cheerful imaginations.† They admired him, they caressed him, they believed that he spoke well and that his reasons were convincing. The most difficult objections he resolved with authority; the charm of his speech and of his person captivated these people still young and not withered by the pedantry of the doctors.

The authority of the young master thus went on increasing day by day, and, naturally, the more others believed in him, the more he believed in himself. His sphere of action was quite limited. It was entirely confined to the basin of Lake Tiberias, and even in this basin it had a favorite region. The lake is twelve or fifteen miles long, by eight or ten broad; although presenting the appearance of a regular oval, it forms from Tiberias to the entrance of the Jordan, a kind of bay, the curve of which measures about eight miles. Here was the field in which the seed which Jesus sowed found at length the earth well prepared. Let us go over it step by step, endeavoring to lift the mantle of barrenness and death with which the demon of Islam has covered it.

On leaving Tiberias, we find at first rocky cliffs, a mountain which seems crumbling into the sea. Then

* Luke, IV, 16 seqq. Comp. Mischna, *Joma*, VII, 1.
† Matt., VII, 28; XIII. 54; Mark, I, 22; VI, 1; Luke, IV, 22, 32.

the mountains trend away; a plain (*El-Ghoueir*) opens almost at the level of the lake. This is a delightful grove of high verdure, furrowed by abundant waters, which come in part from a large round basin of antique construction (*Ain-Medawara*). At the entrance of this plain, which is the country of Genesaret proper, is found the miserable village of *Medjdel*. At the other end of the plain (still following the sea) the site of a village is encountered (*Khan-Minyeh*), very fine fountains (*Ain-et-Tin*), a good road, straight and deep, cut in the rock, which Jesus certainly often trod, and which is the passage between the plain of Genesaret and the northern slope of the lake. A mile further on, we cross a little salt-water river (*Ain-Tabiga*) flowing out of the earth by several large springs a few steps from the lake, which it enters in the midst of a thicket of verdure. Finally, two miles beyond, upon the arid slope which extends from Ain-Tabiga to the mouth of the Jordan, a few huts and a cluster of rather massive ruins are found, called *Tell-Hum*.

Five little cities, of which men will speak forever, as much as of Rome or Athens, were, in the time of Jesus, scattered over the space which extends from the village of Medjdel to Tell-Hum. Of these five villages, Magdala, Dalmanutha, Capernaum, Bethsaida, and Chorazin,* the first only can now be identified with certainty. The wretched village of Medjdel doubtless preserves the name and the place of the little market town which gave to Jesus his most faithful friend.† Dalmanutha was probably near by.‡ It is not impossible that Chorazin was a little inland to the

* The ancient Kinnereth had disappeared or changed its name.

† It is known that it was in fact very near Tiberias. Talm. Jerus., *Maasaroth*, III, 1; *Schebiit*, IX, 1; *Erubin*, V, 7.

‡ Mark, VIII, 10. Comp. Matt., XV, 39

north.* As to Bethsaida and Capernaum, it is in truth entirely by conjecture that they are located at Tell-Hum, at Ain-et-Tin, at Khan-Minyeh, at Ain-Medawara. It would seem that in topography, as in history, there has been a profound design to conceal the traces of the great founder. It is doubtful whether we shall ever succeed, amid this complete devastation, in identifying the places to which humanity would fain come to kiss the imprints of his feet.

The lake, the horizon, the shrubs, the flowers, these are all that remain of the little region of eight or ten miles in which Jesus founded his divine work. The trees have totally disappeared. In this country, where the vegetation was formerly so brilliant that Josephus saw in it a sort of miracle,—nature, according to him, being pleased to collect here, side by side, the plants of the cold latitudes, the productions of the torrid zones, and the trees of the temperate climes, burdened all the year with flowers and fruit ;‡—in this country, I say, the traveler now calculates a day in advance the spot in which he may find on the morrow a little shade for his repast. The lake has become deserted. A single bark, in the most miserable condition, plows to-day these waves once so rich in life and joy. But the waters are still light and transparent.‖ The beach, composed

* At the place named *Korazi* or *Bir-kerazeh*, above Tell-Hum.

† The ancient hypothesis which identified Tell-Hum with Capernaum, although strongly attacked for several years past, has yet numerous defenders. The best argument which can be made in its favor is the name itself of *Tell-Hum*, *Tell* entering into the name of many villages, and possibly replacing *Caphar*. It is impossible, on the other hand, to find near Tell-Hum a fountain corresponding to what Josephus says (*B. J.*, III, x, 8). This fountain of Capernaum seems likely to be Ain Medawara, but Ain Medawara is two miles from the lake, while Capernaum was a village of fishermen upon the border of the sea (Matt., iv, 13, John vi, 17). The difficulties in regard to Bethsaida are still greater; for the hypothesis so generally admitted of two Bethsaidas, one upon the western and the other upon the eastern shore of the lake, six or eight miles apart, is a strange one.

‡ *B. J.*, III, x, 8.

‖ *B. J.*, III, x, 7; James de Vitri, in the *Gesta Dei per Francos*, I, 1075.

of rocks or of pebbles, is almost that of a little sea, not that of a pond, like the shore of Lake Huleh. It is clean, neat, without mud, always beaten at the same level by the slight movement of the waves. Little promontories, covered with oleanders, tamarind trees, and the prickly caper, complete the outline. At two places especially, at the egress of the Jordan, near Tarichœa and at the border of the plain of Genesaret, there are intoxicating parterres, where the waves die away amid clumps of grass and flowers. The brook of Ain-Tabiga forms a little estuary full of pretty shell-fish. Clouds of swimming birds cover the lake. The horizon is sparkling with light. The water, of a celestial azure, deeply encased between frowning rocks, seems, when viewed from the summit of the mountains of Safed, to be in the bottom of a cup of gold. To the north, the snowy ravines of Hermon stand out in white lines against the sky; on the east, the high undulating plains of the Gaulonitis and of Peræa, completely arid, and clothed by the sun in a species of velvety atmosphere, form a continuous mountain-range, or rather a long, elevated terrace, which, from Cæsarea Philippi, trends indefinitely towards the south.

The heat upon the borders is now very oppressive. The lake occupies a depression of six hundred feet below the level of the Mediterranean,* and thus shares the torrid conditions of the Dead Sea.† An abundant vegetation formerly tempered these excessive heats; it is difficult to comprehend that such an oven as the whole basin of the lake now is, from the month of May,

* This is the estimate of Capt. Lynch (in Ritter, *Erd-kunde*, XV., 1st part, p xx). It accords nearly with that of M. de Bertou (*Bulletin de la Soc. de Geogr.*, 2nd series, XII., p. 146).

† The depression of the Dead Sea is twice as great.

was ever the scene of such extraordinary activity. Josephus, moreover, considers the country very temperate.* Doubtless there has been here, as in the Roman campagna, some change of climate, brought about by historical causes. It is Islamism, especially the Moslem reaction against the crusades, which has blasted, like a sirocco of death, the region favored of Jesus. The beautiful land of Genesaret did not suspect that beneath the brow of this peaceful wayfarer, her destinies were swaying. A dangerous compatriot, Jesus was fatal to the country which had the perilous honor of producing him. Become to all an object of love or of hate, envied by two rival fanaticisms, Galilee, as the price of its glory, was to be changed into a desert. But who would say that Jesus had been happier had he lived to the full age of man, obscure in his native village? And who would think of these ingrate Nazarenes, if, at the risk of compromising the future of their little town, one of them had not recognized his Father, and proclaimed himself son of God.

Four or five large villages, situated two or three miles apart, this then, was the little world of Jesus, at the period at which we have arrived. It does not appear that he was ever at Tiberias, a city altogether profane, inhabited in great part by pagans and the habitual residence of Antipater.† Sometimes, however, he left his favorite region. He went in a boat to the eastern shore, to Gergesa for example.‡ Toward the

* *B. J.*, III, x, 7 and 8. † Jos., *Ant.*, XVIII, II, 3; *Vita*, 12 13, 64.

‡ I adopt the opinion of Mr. Thomson (the Land and the Book, II, 34 seqq.), according to whom the Gergesa of Matthew (VIII, 28), identical with the Canaanite village of *Girgasch* (*Gen.*, X, 16, XV, 21; *Deut.*, VII, 1; *Josh.*, XXIV, 11), is the place now called *Kersa* or *Gerda* on the eastern shore, nearly opposite Magdala. Mark (V, 1) and Luke (VIII, 26) say *Gadara* or *Gerasa* in lieu of *Gergesa*. *Gerasa* is an impossible reading, the evangelists apprising us that the village in question was near the lake and opposite Galilee. As to Gadara, now Om-Keis,

north, we behold him at Paneas, Cæsarea Philippi,* at the foot of Hermon. Once, indeed, he made a journey towards Tyre and Sidon,† a country which must then have been marvelously flourishing. In all these regions he was in the full sweep of paganism.‡ At Cæsarea, he saw the celebrated grotto of the *Panium*, in which the source of the Jordan was placed, and which the popular belief surrounded with strange legends;‖ he could behold the marble temple which Herod had built near this in honor of Augustus;§ he probably stopped before the many votive statues to Pan, to the Nymphs, to the Echo of the grotto, which piety had already accumulated in this beautiful place.¶ An Evhemerist Jew, accustomed to regard strange gods as divinized men or as demons, must have considered all these figured representations as idols. To the seductions of the naturalistic worships, which intoxicated the more sensitive races, he was insensible. He had not probably any knowledge that the old sanctuary of Melkarth at Tyre, still contained something of a primitive worship more or less analogous to that of the Jews.** Paganism, which, in Phœnicia, had reared on every hill a temple and a sacred grove, all this appearance of great industry and of worldly riches,†† could have had little charm for him. Monotheism takes away all abil-

six miles from the lake and the Jordan, the local circumstances given by Mark and Luke hardly admit of it. It must be understood besides, that Gergesa may have become Gerasa, a name much more known, and that the topographical impossibilities presented by this last reading may have caused the adoption of Gadara. Cf. Orig., *Comment. in Joann.*, VI, 24; X, 10; Eusebius and St. Jerome *De situ et nomin. loc. hebr.*, at the words Γεργσά, Γεργασεί.

* Matt., XVI, 13; Mark, VIII, 27.

† Matt. XV, 21; Mark VII, 24, 31.

‡ Jos., *Vita*, 13.

‖ Jos., *Ant.*, XV, X, 3; *B. J.* I, XXI, 3; III, X 7; Benjamin de Tudela, p. 46, Edit. Asher.

§ Jos., *Ant.*, XV, X, 3.

¶ *Corpus inscr. gr.*, Nos. 4537, 4538, 4538, *b*, 4539.

** Lucianus (ut fertur), *De dea syria*, 3.

†† Traces of the rich pagan civilization of this time yet cover all the Beled-Bescharrah, especially the mountains which form the group of Cape Blanc and of Cape Nakoura.

ity to comprehend the pagan religions; the Mussulman thrown into polytheistic countries, seems to have no eyes. Jesus, without doubt, learned nothing in these voyages. He returned again to his well-loved shore of Genesaret. The centre of his thoughts was there: there he found faith and love.

CHAPTER IX.

THE DISCIPLES OF JESUS.

In this terrestial paradise, which the great revolutions had thus far but little affected, dwelt a population in perfect harmony with the country itself, active, honest, living a life of cheerfulness and affection. The Lake of Tiberias is one of the most plentifully supplied with fish.* Very successful fisheries were established, especially at Bethsaida and Capernaum, which had produced a certain competency. The families of the fishermen formed a pleasant and peaceful society, stretching by numerous bonds of relationship through all the lake region which we have described. Their leisurely life gave large liberty to their imagination. Ideas in relation to the kingdom of God found, in these little companies of simple people, more credence than anywhere else. Nothing of what is called civilization, in the Greek and worldly sense, had penetrated among them. They had not our German or Celtic seriousness; but, although among them perhaps goodness was often superficial, and without depth, their manners were peaceful, and they had something of intelligence and refinement. They seem somewhat analogous to

* Matt., IV, 18; Luke, V, 44 seqq.; John, I, 44; XXI. 1 seqq.; Jos., *B, J.*, III, X, 7; James de Vitri, in the *Gesta Dei per Francos*, I, p. 1075.

the better populations of the Lebanon, but with the capability which these have not, of producing great men. Jesus there found his real family. He installed himself among them as one of themselves; Capernaum became his own city,* and in the midst of the little circle which adored him, he forgot his skeptical brothers, ungrateful Nazareth and its mocking incredulity.

One house especially, at Capernaum, offered him a pleasant asylum and devoted disciples. It was that of two brothers, both sons of a certain Jonas, who was probably dead at the period when Jesus came to reside upon the shore of the lake. These two brothers were Simon, surnamed Cephas or Peter, and Andrew. Born at Bethsaida,† they were established at Capernaum when Jesus commenced his public life. Peter was married, and had children; his mother-in-law lived with him.‡ Jesus loved this house, and made it his home.‖ Andrew appears to have been a disciple of John the Baptist, and Jesus had perhaps known him on the banks of the Jordan.§ The two brothers continued still, even at the time when it seems that they must have been most occupied with their master, to exercise the calling of fishermen.¶ Jesus, who was fond of playing upon words, said, occasionally, that he would make them fishers of men.** In fact, among all his disciples, he had no more faithful adherents.

Another family, that of Zabdia or Zebedee, a fisherman in comfortable circumstances, and owner of several boats,†† offered to Jesus an ardent welcome. Zeb-

* Matt., IX, 1; Mark, II, 1–2.
† John, I, 44.
‡ Matt., III, 14; Mark, I, 30; Luke, IV, 38; I *Cor.*, IX, 5; I Pet., V, 13. Clem Alex., *Strom.*, III, 6; VII, 11; Pseudo-Clem., *Recogn.*, VII, 25; Eusebius, *H. E.* III, 30
‖ Matt., VIII, 14; XVII, 24; Mark, I, 29–31; Luke, IV, 38
§ John I, 40 seqq.
¶ Matt., IV, 18; Mark, I, 16; Luke, V, 3; John, XXI, 3
** Matt., IV, 19; Mark, I, 17; Luke, V, 10.
†† Mark, I, 20; Luke, V, 10; VIII, 3; John, XIX, 27.

edee had two sons, James, who was the elder, and a younger son, John, who at a later period was called to play so important a part in the history of early Christianity. Both were zealous disciples. Salome, Zebedee's wife, was also strongly attached to Jesus, and accompanied him until his death.*

Women, indeed, welcomed him with ardor. He had with them those reserved manners which render possible a very sweet union of ideas between the sexes. The separation of men and women, which has prevented among Semitic nations, all delicate development, was doubtless, then as in our day, much less rigorous in the country and in villages, than in the great towns. Three or four devoted Galilean women always accompanied the young master, and disputed among themselves the pleasure of listening to him and caring for him in turn.† They brought to the new sect an element of enthusiasm and of the marvelous, the importance of which was already perceived. One of these, Mary of Magdala, who has rendered the name of her poor little village so famous in the world, appears to have been a very exalted person. According to the language of the time, she had been possessed of seven devils;‡ that is to say, she had been affected by nervous diseases apparently inexplicable. Jesus, by his pure and gentle beauty, calmed this troubled organization. The Magdalene was faithful to him even to Golgotha, and on the second day after his death, takes the most prominent part; for she was the principal witness by which faith in the resurrection was established, as we shall see hereafter. Joanna, wife of

* Matt., xxvii, 56; Mark, xv, 40; xvi, 1.
† Matt., xxvii, 55–56; Mark, xv, 40–41; Luke, viii, 2–3; xxiii, 49.
‡ Mark, xvi, 9; Luke, viii, 2; Cf. *Tobit*, iii, 8; vi, 14.

Chuza, one of Antipater's stewards, Susannah, and others who remained unknown, followed him constantly, and ministered unto him.* Some were rich, and, by means of their fortune, placed the young prophet in a position to live without working at the trade which he had hitherto followed.†

Many more followed him habitually, and recognized him as their master: a certain Philip of Bethsaida, Nathaniel, son of Tolmai or Ptolemy of Cana, perhaps one of the twelve,‡ Matthew, probably the same who was the Xenophon of nascent Christianity. He had been a publican, and as such he doubtless handled the *kalam* with greater facility than the rest. Perhaps he thought even then of writing these *Logia*,‖ which are the basis of all that we know of the teachings of Jesus. There are also named among the disciples Thomas, or Didymus,§ who doubted sometimes, but who appears to have been a man of heart and of generous attractions;¶ a Lebbeus, or Thaddeus; a Simon the Zealot,** perhaps a disciple of Juda the Gaulonite, belonging to this party of the *Kenaim*, then existing, and which was soon to play so great a part in the movements of the Jewish people; finally, Judas, son of Simon, of the town of Kerioth, who was the exception in the faithful band, and drew upon himself such appalling renown. He was the only one who was not a Galilean; Kerioth was a town at the extreme south of the tribe of Judah,†† a day's journey beyond Hebron.

* Luke, VIII, 3; XXIV, 10. † Luke, VIII, 3.

‡ John, I, 44 seqq; XXI, 2. I admit the identity of Nathaniel and the apostle who figures in the lists under the name of *Bar Tholomew*.

‖ Papias, in Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, III, 39.

§ This second name is the Greek translation of the first.

¶ John, XI, 16; XX, 24 seqq.

** Matt., X, 4; Mark, III, 18; Luke, VI, 15; *Acts*, I, 13; Gospel of the Ebionim, in Epiph., *Adv. hær.*, XXX, 13 †† Now *Kuryetein* or *Kereitein*.

We have seen that his family was, in general, little attracted to him.* Yet James and Jude, his cousins by Mary Cleophas, were henceforth numbered among his disciples, and Mary Cleophas herself was one of the company which followed him to Calvary.† At this time, we do not see his mother near him. It is only after the death of Jesus that Mary acquires great consideration‡ and that the disciples seek to attach her to themselves.‖ Then also the members of the family of the founder, under the title of "brothers of the Lord," form an influential group, which was long at the head of the church of Jerusalem,§ and which, after the sack of that city, took refuge in Batanea.¶ The mere fact of having been related to him became a positive advantage just as, after the death of Mahomet, the wives and daughters of the prophet, who had had no importance during his life, became great authorities.

In this friendly company, Jesus evidently had preferences, and, to some extent, a more select circle. The two sons of Zebedee, James and John, appear to have occupied the first rank in this. They were full of fire and passion. Jesus had aptly surnamed them "Sons of Thunder," because of their excessive zeal, which, if it had wielded the thunderbolt, would have made too frequent use of it.** John, especially, appears to have enjoyed a certain familiarity with Jesus. Perhaps this disciple, who afterwards was to write out his remembrances in a manner in which his personal interest is too apparent, exaggerated the affection which

* The circumstance reported in John, xix, 25–27, seems to suppose that at no period of his public life did the brothers of Jesus attach themselves to him.

† Matt., xxvii, 56; Mark, xv, 40; John, xix, 25.

‡ *Acts*, i, 14. Comp. Luke, i, 23; ii, 35, implying already great respect for Mary.

‖ John, xix, 25 seqq.

§ See above, p. 68, note ¶.

¶ Julius Africanus in Eusebius, *H. E.*, i, 7

** Mark, iii, 17; ix, 37 seqq.; x, 35 seqq.; Luke, ix, 49 seqq.; 54 seqq.

his master bore him.* It is still more significant that in the synoptic gospels, Simon Barjona or Peter, James, son of Zebedee, and John, his brother, form a sort of private circle, which Jesus calls to him at certain moments when he distrusts the faith or the intelligence of the rest.† It seems, moreover, that they were all three associated in their fisheries.‡ The affection of Jesus for Peter was deep. Peter's character, straight-forward, sincere, and impetuous, pleased Jesus, who sometimes indulged in a smile at his downright ways. Peter, little given to mysticism, communicated to the master his simple doubts, his dislikes, and his very human weaknesses,‖ with a frank honesty which reminds us of that of Joinville towards St. Louis. Jesus chided him in a friendly way, full of confidence and esteem. As to John, his youth,§ his exquisite tenderness of heart,¶ and his vivid imagination,** must have had great charm. The personality of this extraordinary man, who gave such a decided deflection to nascent Christianity, was not developed until later. In old age, he wrote concerning his master, this strange gospel,†† which contains such precious teachings, but in which, to our conception, the character of Jesus is falsified in many points. John's nature was too powerful and too deep to be able to stoop to the im-

* John, XIII, 23; XVIII, 15 seqq.; XIX, 26–27; XX, 2, 4; XXI, 7, 20 seqq.

† Matt., XVII, 1; XXVI, 37; Mark, V, 37; IX, 1; XIII, 3; XIV, 33; Luke, IX, 28. The idea that Jesus had communicated to these three disciples a gnosis or secret doctrine was broached at a very early day. It is singular that John, in his Gospel, does not once mention his brother James.

‡ Matt., IV, 18–22; Luke, V, 10; John, XXI, 2 seqq.

‖ Matt., XIV, 28; XVI, 22; Mark, VIII, 32 seqq.

§ He appears to have lived until nearly the year 100. See his Gospel, XXI, 15–23 and the ancient authorities collected by Eusebius, *H. E.*, III, 20, 23.

¶ See the Epistles which are attributed to him, and which are surely by the same author as the fourth Gospel.

** We do not attempt to decide, however, whether the Apocalypse is by him.

†† The common tradition seems to me sufficiently justified upon this point. It is evident, however, that the school of John retouched his Gospel after him, (see the whole of Chap. XXI).

personal tone of the first evangelists. He was the biographer of Jesus as Plato was of Socrates. Habituated to revolve his souvenirs with the feverish restlessness of an exalted soul, he transformed his master while endeavoring to delineate him, and at times leads us to suspect (unless other hands have changed his work) that perfect good faith was not always his rule and his law in the composition of that singular production.

No hierarchy, properly so-called, existed in the rising sect. All were to call each other "brethren," and Jesus absolutely proscribed titles of superiority, such as *rabbi*, "master," "father," himself alone being master, and God alone being father. The greatest should be the servant of the others.* Yet Simon Barjona is distinguished among his equals by a quite peculiar degree of importance. Jesus lived with him and taught in his boat;† his house was the center of the preaching of the gospels. He was generally considered the head of the flock, and it is to him that the collectors of taxes apply for the sums due from the community.‡ Simon was the first who had recognized Jesus as the Messiah.‖ In a moment of unpopularity, Jesus asked his disciples: "Will ye also go away?" Simon answered: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life."§ Jesus repeatedly accorded to him a certain pre-eminence in his church,¶ and gave to him the Syriac surname of *Cephas* (Stone), meaning thereby that he made him the corner-stone of the edifice.** At one time, even, he seems to promise him "the keys of

* Matt., xviii, 4; xx, 25-26; xxiii, 8-12; Mark, ix, 34; x, 42-46.
† Luke, v, 3.
‡ Matt., xvii, 23.
‖ Matt., xvi, 16-17.
§ John, vi, 68-70.
¶ Matt., x, 2; Luke, xxii, 32; John, xxi, 15 seqq.; *Acts*, i, ii, v, etc.; *Gal.*, i, 18, ii, 7-8.
** Matt., xvi, 18; John, i, 42.

the kingdom of heaven," and accords to him the right to pronounce upon earth decisions which shall always be ratified in heaven.*

Undoubtedly, this pre-eminence of Peter excited some jealousy. This jealousy was kindled especially in view of the future, in view of this kingdom of God, where all the disciples would be seated upon thrones, on the right and on the left of the master, to judge the twelve tribes of Israel.† They questioned who should then be nearest to the Son of man, acting in some sort as his prime minister and his assistant judge. The two sons of Zebedee aspired to this rank. Filled with this idea, they put forward their mother, Salome, who one day took Jesus aside, and asked of him the two places of honor for her sons.‡ Jesus averted the request by his habitual principle, that whoso exalts himself shall be abused, and that the kingdom of heaven shall belong to the little ones. This caused some outcry in the community; there was great discontent against James and John.‖ The same rivalry seems to appear in the gospel of John, in which we behold the writer incessantly declaring that he was the "beloved disciple" to whom the master at death confided his mother, and systematically seeking to place himself near Simon Peter, at times to put himself before him, in important junctures where the older evangelists had omitted him.§

Among the persons mentioned above, all of whom anything is known had commenced as fishermen. At

* Matt., xvi, 19. Elsewhere, it is true (Matt., xviii, 18), the same power is accorded to all the apostles.
† Matt., xviii, 1 seqq.; Mark, ix, 33; Luke, ix, 46; xxii, 30.
‡ Matt., xx, 20 seqq.; Mark, x, 35 seqq. ‖ Mark, x, 41.
§ John, xviii, 15 seqq.; xix, 26–27; xx, 2 seqq.; xxi, 7, 21.

all events none of them belonged to an elevated socia. class. Matthew or Levi, son of Alpheus,* had been a publican. But those to whom that name was given in Judea were not the farmer generals, men of an elevated rank (always Roman knights) who were called *publicani*† at Rome. They were the agents of those farmer-generals, employees of a low grade, simple land-waiters. The great road from Acre to Damascus, one of the most ancient roads in the world, which crossed Galilee passing by the lake,‡ greatly multiplied there this species of employees. Capernaum, which was perhaps upon the route, possessed a numerous body of them.‖ That profession has never been popular; but among the Jews it passed for an absolute crime. The tax, new to them, was the sign of their vassalage; one school, that of Juda the Gaulonite, held that to pay it was an act of paganism. Thus the tax-collectors were abhorred by the zealots of the Law. They were named only in company with assassins, high-way robbers, and men of infamous life.§ Jews who accepted such functions were excommunicated and became incapacitated from making a will; their money-chests

* Matt., IX, 9; X, 3; Mark, II, 14; III, 18; Luke, V, 27; VI, 15; *Acts.*, I, 13. Gospel of the Ebionim, in Epiph., *Adv. hær.*, XXX, 13. We must suppose, strange as it may seem, that these two names were borne by the same personage. The story, Matt., IX, 9, formed after the ordinary model of the legends of apostolic vocations, is, it is true, somewhat vague, and certainly was not written by the apostle in question. But we must remember that, in the present gospel of Matthew, the only portion which is by the apostle, is the Discourses of Jesus. See Papias, in Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.*, III, 39.

† Cicero, *De provinc. consular*, 5; *Pro Plancio*, 9; Tac., *Ann.*, IV, 6. Pliny, *Hist. nat.*, XII, 32; Appian, *Bell. Civ.*, II, 13.

‡ It remained celebrated down to the time of the crusades, under the name of *Via maris*. Cf. Isaiah, IX, 1; Matt., IV, 13–15; Tobit, I, 1. I think that the road cut in the rock, near Ain-et-Tin, was part of it, and that the route turned thence towards the *Bridge of Jacob's Daughters*, just as it now does. A portion of the road from Ain-et-Tin to this bridge is of ancient construction.

‖ Matt., IX, 9 seqq.

§ Matt., V, 46–47; IX, 10, 11; XI, 19; XVIII, 17; XXI, 31–32, Mark, II, 15–16, Luke, V, 30; VII, 34; XV, 1; XVIII, 11; XIX, 7; Lucien, *Necyoman*, II; Dio Chrysost., **orat.** IV, p. 85; orat. XIV, p. 269 (edit. Emperius); Mischna, *Neda im*, III, 4.

were accursed and the casuists prohibited the faithful from changing money with them*. These poor men, outcasts from society, looked to each other. Jesus accepted a dinner which Levi offered him, and at which there were, according to the language of the times, "many publicans and sinners." This caused great scandal.† In these ill-famed houses, one ran the risk of meeting disreputable society. We shall often see him thus, careless of shocking the prejudices of right-thinking people, seeking to elevate the classes humiliated by the orthodox, and exposing himself in this manner to the most vehement reproaches of devotees.

Jesus owed these numerous conquests to the infinite charm of his person and his speech. A penetrating remark, a look falling upon a simple conscience, which needed only to be awakened, made for him an ardent disciple. Sometimes Jesus made use of an innocent artifice, which Joan of Arc also employed. He would aver that he knew something intimately concerning him whom he wished to win, or he would recall to him some circumstance dear to his heart. It is thus that he touched Nathaniel,‡ Peter,‖ and the Samaritan woman.§ Dissembling the true cause of his power, I mean his superiority over those around him, he suffered them to believe, in order to satisfy the ideas of the times, ideas which were moreover entirely his own, that a revelation from on high discovered to him their secrets and opened their hearts. All thought that he lived in a sphere superior to that of humanity,

* Mischna, *Baba Kama*, x, 7; Talm. of Jerus., *Demai*, ii, 3; Talm. of Bab., *Sanhedrin*, 25 *b*.
† Luke, v, 29 seqq.
‡ John, i, 48 seqq.
‖ John, i. 42.
§ John, iv, 17 seqq.

It was said that he conversed upon the mountains with Moses and Elias;* it was believed that, in his moments of solitude angels came to pay their homage to him, and established a supernatural intercourse between him and heaven.†

* Matt., xvii, 3; Mark, ix, 3; Luke, ix, 30–31
† Matt., iv, 11; Mark, i, 13.

CHAPTER X.

THE SERMONS BY THE SEA.

Such was the group which, upon the banks of the Lake of Tiberias, pressed around Jesus. The aristocracy was represented by a tax-gatherer and by the wife of a steward. The rest consisted of fishermen and simple people. Their ignorance was extreme; their understanding was weak; they believed in specters and in spirits.* No element of Hellenic culture had penetrated this first cœnaculum; their Jewish instruction was also very incomplete; but heart and good-will overflowed among them. The beautiful climate of Galilee made the existence of these honest fishermen a perpetual enchantment. They prefigured truly the kingdom of God, simple, good, happy, rocked gently upon their delightful little sea, or sleeping at night upon its shores. We cannot conceive the intoxication of a life which thus glides away in the presence of the heavens, the glow, mild yet strong, which this perpetual contact with nature gives, the dreams of these nights passed amid the brilliancy of the stars, beneath the azure dome of the illimitable depths. It was during such a night that Jacob, his head pillowed upon a stone, saw in the stars the promise of an innumerable

* Matt., xiv, 26; Mark, vi, 49; Luke, xxiv, 39; John, vi, 19.

posterity, and the mysterious ladder by which the Elohim came and went from heaven to earth. In the time of Jesus, the heavens were not yet closed, nor had the earth grown cold. The cloud still opened over the Son of man; angels ascended and descended upon his head,* visions of the kingdom of God were everywhere; for man carried them in his heart. The clear, mild eye of these simple souls contemplated the universe in its ideal source; perhaps the world disclosed its secret to the divinely lucid conscience of these fortunate children, whose purity of heart made them worthy one day to see God.

Jesus lived with his disciples almost always in the open air. Often he went into a boat and taught his hearers crowded upon the shore.† Sometimes, he sat down upon the hills which border the lake, where the air is so pure and the horizon so luminous. The faithful flock went also, cheerful wayfarers, receiving the inspirations of the master in their first flower. An innocent doubt sometimes arose, a gently skeptical question; Jesus, with a smile or a look, silenced the objection. At every step, in the passing cloud, the growing grain, the yellowing ear, they saw the sign of the kingdom at hand; they believed that they were soon to see God, and be the masters of the world; their tears turned into joy, it was the advent upon earth of the universal consolation.

"Blessed, said the master, are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

"Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted

* John, I, 51. † Matt., XIII, 1-2; Mark, III, 9; IV, 1; Luke, V, 3.

"Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth.

"Blessed are they which hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled.

"Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy.

"Blessed are the pure in heart; for they shall see God.

"Blessed are the peace-makers; for they shall be called the children of God.

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."*

His preaching was sweet and gentle, full of nature and of the perfume of the fields. He loved flowers, and he took from them his most charming lessons. The birds of heaven, the sea, the mountains, the plays of children, were used by turns in his teachings. His style had nothing of the Greek period, but approached much nearer to that of the Hebrew parabolists, and especially to the sayings of the Jewish doctors, his contemporaries, such as we find them in the *Pirké Aboth*. His development of his theme was slight, and formed species of surats like those of the Koran, which, strung together, afterwards composed these long discourses which were written by Matthew.† No transition connected these diverse pieces; yet ordinarily the same inspiration penetrated them and gave them unity. It was especially in parable that the master excelled. Nothing in Judaism had given him the model of this delightful style.‡ He himself created it. It is true

* Matt., v, 3–10; Luke, vi, 20–26.

† These are what are called the Λόγια κυριακά, Papias, in Eusebius, *H.E.*, iii, 39.

‡ The apologue, such as we find it in *Judges*, ix, 8 seqq.; II *Sam.*, xii, 1 seqq., has only a resemblance in form to the evangelical parable. The profound originality of this latter is in the sentiment which pervades it.

that we find in the Buddhist books parables of exactly the same tone and the same composition as the Gospel parables. But it is difficult to admit that a Buddhist influence could have been felt in these. The spirit of meekness and the depth of feeling which equally animated Buddhism and nascent Christianity, suffice perhaps to explain these analogies.

A total indifference to external modes of life and to the vain appurtenances of "comfort," which in our severe climate are a necessity, was the consequence of the simple and pleasant life which was led in Galilee. Cold climates, by obliging man to struggle perpetually against external nature, cause too much value to be attached to the pursuit of comfort and luxury. On the contrary, the countries which awakens fewest wants are the lands of idealism and poesy. The accessories of life are there insignificant compared with the pleasure of living. The embellishment of the house is superfluous; men remain in-doors as little as possible. The hearty and regular alimentation of less generous climates would be considered burdensome and disagreeable. And as for luxury of dress, how can they vie with what God has given to the earth and to the birds of the sky? Labor, in such climates appears superfluous; what it yields is not worth that which it costs. The beasts of the fields are clad better than the richest man, and they do nothing. This contempt, which, when it has not sloth for its cause, contributes greatly to the elevation of the soul, inspired in Jesus charming apologues: "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal, but

* See especially the *Lotus de la bonne loi*, ch. III and IV.

lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.* No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and Mammon.† Therefore I say unto you, take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin; And yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? Therefore take no thought, saying, what shall we eat? or what shall we drink? or, wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek,) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first righteousness and the kingdom of God,‡ and all these things shall be added unto you: Take therefore no thought for the morrow; for the

* Compare Talm. of Bab., *Baba Bathra*, 11, *a*.

† The god of riches and of hidden treasures, a sort of Plutus in the mythology of Phœnicia and Syria.

‡ I adopt here the reading of Lachmann and Tischendorf

morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof."*

This sentiment, essentially Galilean, had a decisive influence upon the destiny of the nascent sect. The first rule of the happy flock, relying upon their heavenly Father to satisfy their wants, was to regard the cares of life, as evils which stifle in man the germ of all good.‡ Every day they asked God for the morrow's bread.‡ Wherefore lay up treasure? The kingdom of God is at hand. "Sell that ye have and give alms," said the master. "Provide for yourselves bags which wax not old, a treasure in the heavens that faileth not."‖ What is more senseless than heaping stores for heirs whom you shall never see?§ As an example of human folly, Jesus was fond of citing the case of a man who, after having enlarged his barns and laid up goods for many years, died before he had enjoyed them.¶ Brigandage, which was very common in Galilee,** gave much force to this view of things. The poor, who did not suffer by it, came to regard themselves as the favored of God; while the rich, having no sure possession, were the truly disinherited. In our society, established upon a very rigorous idea of property, the position of the poor man is horrible; he has literally no place under the sun. There are no flowers, no grass, no shade, but for him who possesses the earth. In the East these are the gifts of God, which belong to no man. The proprietor has but a slender privilege; nature is the patrimony of all.

* Matt., VI, 19–21, 24–34. Luke, XII, 22–31, 33–34; XVI, 13. Compare the precepts, Luke, X, 7–8, full of the same simple feeling, and Talm. of Bab., *Sota*, 48 *b*.

† Matt., XIII, 22; Mark, IV, 19; Luke, VIII, 14.

‡ Matt., VI, 11; Luke, XI, 3. This is the sense of the word ἐπιούσιος.

‖ Luke, XII, 33–34. § Luke, XII, 20. ¶ Luke, XII, 16 seqq.

** Jos., *Ant.*, XVII, X, 4 seqq.; *Vita*, 11, etc.

Dawning Christianity, moreover, in this did but follow the track of the Esssenes or Therapeutes, and the Jewish sects founded upon life in communities. A communistic element entered into all of these sects, despised equally by the Pharisees and the Sadducees. Messianism, entirely political with the orthodox Jews, became with them entirely social. By a temperate contemplative existence, leaving individual liberty in full play, these little churches thought to inaugurate upon earth the kingdom of heaven. Utopias of blissful life, founded upon the fraternity of man and the pure worship of the true God, preoccupied lofty souls, and produced on all sides essays bold and sincere, but of small results.

Jesus whose relations with the Essenes it is very difficult to determine with precision (resemblance, in history, not always implying intercommunication), was in this respect certainly their brother. Community of goods was for some time the rule in the new society.* Avarice was the capital sin;† now it must be understood that the sin of "avarice," against which Christian rule was so severe, was then simple attachment property. The first condition necessary for a disciple of Jesus, was to realize his fortune and to give the proceeds to the poor. Those who recoiled before this extremity did not enter the community.‡ Jesus repeated often that he who found the kingdom of God must purchase it at the price of all his goods, and that in so doing he yet made an advantageous bargain. "The man who hath found a treasure in a field," said he, "without losing an instant goeth and selleth that

* Acts, IV, 32, 34–37; V, 1 seqq.
† Matt., XIII, 22; Luke, XII, 15 seqq
‡ Matt., XIX, 21; Mark, X, 21 seqq.; 29–30; Luke, XVIII, 22–23, 28.

he hath and buyeth that field. The merchantman who hath found one pearl of great price selleth all, and buyeth it."* Alas! the inconveniences of this regime soon became manifest. A treasurer was necessary, Judas of Kerioth was chosen for that office. Rightfully or wrongfully, he was accused of stealing the common fund ;† so much is certain, that he made a bad end.

Sometimes the master, more versed in the things of heaven than in those of earth, taught a political economy still more singular. In a strange parable, a steward is praised for having made friends among the poor at the expense of his master, that the poor in their turn might receive him in the kingdom of heaven. The poor, indeed, as they are to be the dispensers of this kingdom, will receive only those who have given to them. A prudent man, looking to the future, should therefore seek to win them. "The Pharisees, who were covetous," says the Evangelist, "heard these things and they derided him."‡ Heard they also this terrible parable? "There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate, full of sores, And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores. And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried away by the angels into Abraham's bosom. The rich man also died, and was buried :‖ And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus

* Matt., XIII, 44-46. Luke XVI, 1-14.

† John, XII, 6.

‖ See the Greek text.

in his bosom. And he cried, and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue: for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy life-time received thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted and thou art tormented."* What more just? Afterwards this was called the parable of the "wicked rich man." But it is purely and simply the parable of the "rich man." He is in hell because he is rich, because he does not give his goods to the poor, because he dines well, while others at his gate fare poorly. Finally at a time when; with less exaggeration, Jesus presents the obligation of selling one's goods and giving them to the poor, only as a condition of perfection, he still makes this terrible declaration: "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God."†

A feeling of wonderful depth controled Jesus in all this, as well as the band of joyous children who accompanied him, and made him for all eternity the true creator of the soul's peace, the great comforter of life. In releasing man from what he calls "the cares of this world," Jesus went to excess and attacked the essential conditions of human society; but he founded this lofty spirituality which during centuries has filled soul with joy in this vale of tears. He saw with perfect

* Luke, xvi, 19–25. Luke, I know, has a very decided communistic tendency (compare vi, 20–21, 25–26), and I think he has exaggerated this feature of the teaching of Jesus. But the characteristics of the Λόγια of Matthew are significant.

† Matt., xix, 24; Mark, x, 25; Luke, xviii, 25. This proverbial saying is found in the Talmud (Bab., *Berakoth*, 55 *b*, *Baba metsia*, 38 *b*), and in the Koran (Sur. vii, 38). Origen and the Greek interpreters, ignorant of the Semitic proverb, thought that it related to a cable (κάμιλος).

clearness that the heedlessness of man, his want of philosophy and morality, come generally from the distractions into which he allows himself to be drawn, from the cares which beset him and which civilization multiplies beyond measure.* The Gospel has thus been the supreme remedy for the sorrows of common life, a perpetual *sursum corda*, a mighty distraction from the wretched cares of earth, a sweet appeal like that of Jesus to the ear of Martha: "Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things; but one thing is needful." Thanks to Jesus, the most spiritless existence, that most absorbed in sad or humiliating duties, has had its glimpse of heaven. In our bustling civilization, the memory of the free life of Galilee has been like the perfume of another world, like a "dew of Hermon,"† which has prevented sterility and vulgarity from completely usurping the field of God.

* Matt., xiii, 22. † Ps. cxxxiii, 3.

CHAPTER XI.

THE KINGDOM OF GOD CONCEIVED AS THE ADVENT OF THE POOR.

These maxims, good for a country in which the conditions of life are free sunshine and the open air, this delicate communism of a flock of God's children, living in confidence upon the bosom of their father, were very well for a simple sect, persuaded continually that its utopia was at the point of realization. But it is evident that they could not rally the mass of society. Jesus, indeed, soon comprehended that the official world of his time would give no countenance to his kingdom. He resolved upon his course with extreme boldness. Leaving all this world to its hardness of heart and its narrow prejudices, he turned towards the simple. A vast substitution of race is to take place. The kingdom of God is: first, for children and for those who are like them; second, for the outcasts of this world, victims of social arrogance, which repulses the good but humble man; third, for heretics and schismatics, publicans, Samaritans and pagans of Tyre and Sidon. An energetic parable illustrated thi appeal to the people and justified it:* A king has made a wedding feast and sends forth his servants

* Matt., xxii, 2 seqq.; Luke, xiv, 16 seqq. Compare Matt., viii, 11-12; xxi, 32 seqq.

to call them that were bidden. All excuse themselves; some maltreat the servants. The king then takes a decided stand. The proper persons would not come at his invitation; very well! it shall be the people found in the streets and lanes, the poor, the blind and the halt, anybody; the house must be filled, and I swear to you, said the king, that none of those which were bidden shall taste of my supper."

Pure Ebionism, that is to say the doctrine that the poor (*ebionim*) only shall be saved, that the reign of the poor is at hand, was therefore the doctrine of Jesus. "Woe unto you that are rich! said he, for ye have received your consolation. Woe unto you that are full! for ye shall hunger. Woe unto you that laugh! for ye shall mourn and weep."* "When thou makest a dinner or a supper, said he again, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy neigbors; lest they also bid thee again, and recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just."† It is perhaps in an analogous sense that he often repeated: "Be ye good bankers,"‡ that is to say: Make good investments for the kingdom of God, by giving your goods to the poor, according to the ancient proverb: "He that hath pity upon the poor, lendeth to the Lord."‖

This was not, moreover, a new thing. The most exalted democratic movement of which humanity has

* Luke VI, 24-25.

† Luke, XIV, 12-14.

‡ A word preserved by a very ancient and wide-spread tradition. Clement of Alex., *Strom.*, I, 28. It is found in Origen, in St. Jerome, and in a great number of the Fathers of the Church.

‖ Prov., XIX, 17.

preserved the remembrance (the only one also which has been successful, for it alone has confined itself to the realm of pure idea), had long been agitating the Jewish race. The thought that God is the avenger of the poor and feeble against the rich and powerful, is found on every page of the Old Testament. The history of Israel is of all histories that in which the popular spirit has most constantly ruled. The prophets, true tribunes of the people, and in one sense the boldest of tribunes, had thundered without ceasing against the great and established a strict relation, on the one hand, between the words "rich, impious, violent and wicked," and, on the other, between the words, "poor, gentle, humble and pious."* Under the Seleucidæ, nearly all the aristocrats having apostatized and passed over to Hellenism, these associations of ideas grew all the stronger. The Book of Enoch contains maledictions still more forcible than those of the Gospel against the world, the rich and the powerful.† Luxury it presents as a crime. The 'Son of man' in this strange Apocalypse, dethrones kings, snatches them away from their voluptuous life and hurls them headlong into hell.‡ The initiation of Judea into mundane life, the recent introduction of an element of luxury and ease altogether worldly, provoked a furious reaction in favor of patriarchal simplicity. "Woe to you who despise the dwelling and the inheritance of your father! Woe to you who build you palaces with the sweat of others! Each one of the stones, each

* See, in particular, Amos, II, 6; Is., LXIII, 9; Ps., XXV, 9; XXXVII, 11; LXIX, 33; and the Hebrew dictionaries in general at the words:

אביון, דל, עני, ענו, חסיד, עשיר, הוללים, עריץ.

† Ch. LXII, LXIII, XCVII, C, CIV. ‡ Enoch, ch. XLVI, 4-8.

one of the bricks thereof is a sin."* The name of "poor" (*ebion*) had become synonymous with "saint," and "friend of God." It was the name which the Galilean disciples of Jesus loved to give themselves; it was long the name of the Judaizing Christians of the Batanea and of Haouran (Nazarenes, Hebrews) who remained faithful to the language as well as to the primitive teachings of Jesus, and who boasted of possessing among them the descendants of his family.† At the close of the second century these good sectaries, who had dwelt without the great current which bore away the other churches, are classed as heretics (Ebionites), and in order to explain their name a pretended heresiarch *Ebion*‡ was invented.

We readily discover, indeed, that this exaggerated taste for poverty could not be very durable. It was one of those utopian elements which always existed in great foundations, and which time tempers to just proportions. Transported into the broad medium of human society, Christianity was one day very readliy to consent to take the rich to its bosom, just as Buddhism, exclusively monastic in its origin, when conversions began to multiply, soon came to admit lay members. But everything preserves the mark of its origins. Although quickly laid aside and forgotten, Ebionism left in all the whole history of Christian institutions a

* Enoch, XCIX, 13, 14.

† Julius Africanus in Eusebius, *H. E.*, I, 7; Eus., *De Situ et nom. loc. hebr.*, at the word χωβά. Origen, *Contra Celsum*, II, 1; *De principiis*, IV, 61; Epiph, *Adv. hær.*, XXIX, 7, 9; XXX, 2, 18.

‡ See especially Origen, *Contra Celsum*, II, 1; *De principiis*, IV, 22. Compare Epiph., *Adv. hær.*, XXX, 17. Irenæus, Origen. Eusebius, and the apostolic Constitutions are ignorant of the existence of such a personage. The author of the Philosophumena seems to hesitate (VII, 34 and 35; X, 22 and 23. It is through Tertullian and especially through Epiphanius that the fable of an *Ebion* was bruited abroad. Otherwise all the Fathers agree upon the etymology Ἐβίων=πτωχός.

leaven which was not lost. The collection of the *Logia* or discourses of Jesus was made in the Ebionite medium of the Batanea.* "Poverty" remained an ideal which the true lineage of Jesus never abandoned. To possess nothing was the true evangelical condition; mendicity became a virtue, a sacred state. The great Umbrian movement of the thirteenth century, which is, among all attempts at religious foundation, that which most resembles the Galilean movement, was made entirely in the name of poverty. Francis d'Assisi, that man of all the world who, by his exquisite goodness and his sympathy, delicate, refined, and tender, with universal life, has most resembled Jesus, was poor. The mendicant orders, the innumerable communist sects of the middle ages (Pauvres de Lyon, Bégards, Bons-Hommes, Fratricelli, Humiliati, Gospel Poor, etc.), grouped under the banner of the "Eternal Gospel," professed to be, and were in fact, the true disciples of Jesus. But here again the most impossible dreams of the new religion were fruitful. The pious mendicity, of which our industrial and administrative societies are so impatient, was, in its day and beneath the sky which comported with it, full of charm. It offered to a multitude of contemplative and gentle souls the only condition which befitted them. To have made poverty an object of love and desire, to have lifted the beggar upon the altar and sanctified the dress of the man of the people, is a master-stroke at which political economy may not be deeply touched, but before which the true moralist cannot remain indifferent. Humanity, to bear its burden, has need to believe that it is not fully paid by its wages. The greatest service

* Epiph., *Adv. hær.*, XIX, XXIX and XXX, especially, XXIX, 9

which can be rendered it is to repeat to it often that it does not live by bread alone.

Like all great men, Jesus had sympathy with the people, and felt himself at home with them. The Gospel was made, in his idea, for the poor; it is to them that he brings the good news of salvation.* All the outcasts of orthodox Judaism were his favorites. Love of the people, pity for their weakness, the sentiment of the democratic chief, who feels living in him the spirit of the multitude, and recognizes himself as its natural interpreter, constantly bursts forth in his acts and his discourses.†

The chosen band presented, indeed, a very motley character, at which the orthodox must have been greatly astonished. It numbered in its bosom people with whom a Jew of self-respect would not associate.‡ Perhaps Jesus found in this unconventional society more distinction and more heart than in a pedantic, formal respectability, proud of its seeming morality. The Pharisees, exaggerating the Mosaic rules, came to think themselves polluted by contact with people less rigid than they; they reached in their meals almost the puerile distinctions of caste in India. Despising these miserable aberrations of religious sentiment, Jesus loved to dine with those who were its victims;‖ they saw beside him persons who were said to lead an evil life, perhaps, it is true, for this cause only, that they did not share in the follies of the pretended devotees. The Pharisees and doctors cried out at the scandal. "Behold," said they, "with what manner of men he eats!" Jesus made, then, keen responses, which exasperated

* Matt., xi, 5; Luke, vi, 20–21.
† Matt., ix, 36; Mark, vi, 34.
‡ Matt., ix, 10 seqq.; Luke, xv, entire
‖ Matt., ix, 11; Mark, ii, 16; Luke, v 30.

the hypocrites: "The whole need not a physician;"* or again: "The shepherd who hath lost one sheep out of an hundred, leaves the ninety and nine to go after that which is lost, and, when he hath found it, he bringeth it home upon his shoulders rejoicing;"† or again: "The son of man is come to save that which was lost;"‡ or again: "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners;"‖ finally, that delightful parable of the prodigal son, in which he who has fallen is presented as having a sort of privilege of love over the one who has always been righteous. Women, weak or guilty, surprised by so much charm, and tasting for the first time the alluring contact of virtue, freely approached him. They were astonished that he did not repulse them. "Oh," said the puritans, "this man is no prophet; for if he were, he would perceive that the woman who is touching him is a sinner." Jesus answered by the parable of a creditor who forgave his debtors unequal debts, and he feared not to prefer the lot of him to whom the largest debt was forgiven.§ He measured souls only by their love. Women, with hearts full of tears and disposed by their faults to feelings of humility, were nearer his kingdom than common-place natures, in whom it is often little merit not to have fallen. It is easy to conceive, on the other hand, that these tender souls, finding in their conversion to the sect, a ready means of re-instatement, became passionately attached to him.

* Matt., IX, 12.
† Luke, XV, 4 seqq.
‡ Matt., XVIII, 11; Luke, XIX, 10.
‖ Matt., IX, 13.
§ Luke, VII, 36 seqq. Luke, who loves to dwell upon all that relates to the pardon of sinners (compare X, 30 seqq.; XV, entire; XVII 16 seqq.; XIX 2 seqq.; XXIII, 39–43), has combined this story with the incidents of another, that of the anointment of the feet, which took place at Bethany some days before the death of Jesus. But the pardon of the woman taken in adultery was undoubtedly one of the essential features of the anecdotal life of Jesus. Cf. John, VII, 1, 3 seqq., Papias, in Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.*, III, 39.

Far from seeking to check the murmurs which his contempt for the social susceptibilities of the times aroused, he seemed to take pleasure in exciting them. Never did anyone avow more haughtily that disdain of the "world," which is the condition of great achievements and of great originality. He pardoned the rich man only when, by reason of some prejudice, the rich man was hated by society.* He loftily preferred people of equivocal life and of little consideration to the orthodox magnates. "The publicans and the harlots," said he to them, "go into the kingdom of God before you. John came; the publicans and the harlots believed him; and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him."† We can understand how cutting must have been the reproach of not having followed the example of women of pleasure, to people making a profession of gravity and rigid morality.

He had no external affectation nor show of austerity. He did not shun pleasure; he went gladly to marriage festivals. One of his miracles was performed to enliven a village wedding. These marriage parties in the East are held in the evening. Each one carries a lamp; the lights dancing to and fro produce a very pleasing effect. Jesus loved this gay and animated spectacle, and drew from it some of his parables.‡ When such conduct was compared to that of John the Baptist, it seemed scandalous.‖ One day, when the disciples of John and the Pharisees were observing a fast: "Why," he was asked, "do the disciples of John and the Pharisees fast and pray, but thine eat and

* Luke, xix, 2 seqq.
‡ Mark, ii, 18; Luke, v, 33.
† Matt., xxi, 31–33.
‖ Matt., xxv, 1 seqq

drink?" "Suffer them," said Jesus; "can ye make the groomsmen fast, while the bridegroom is with them? The days will come when the bridegroom shal be taken away from them; then shall they fast."* His gentle gaiety was constantly expressing itself by lively reflections and kindly pleasantries. "Whereunto," aid he, "shall I liken this generation? and to what are they like? They are like unto children sitting in the market-place, and calling one to another, and saying:

We have piped unto you,
And ye have not danced;
We have mourned unto you,
And ye have not wept.†

John came, neither eating nor drinking; and ye say: He is a mad man. The son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say: Behold a gluttonous man and a wine bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of all her works."‡

Thus he traversed Galilee in the midst of a perpetual holiday. He rode upon a mule, an animal in the East so sure and good, whose large black eye, shaded with long lashes, is full of gentleness. His disciples sometimes displayed a rustic pomp about him at the expense of their garments, which took the place of carpets. They put these upon the mule which bore him, or spread them upon the ground in his path.‖ When he alighted at a house, it was a rejoicing and a benediction. He stopped in the market-towns and at

* Matt., IX, 14 seqq.; Mark, II, 18 seqq.; Luke, V, 33 seqq.

† In allusion to some children's play.

‡ Matt., XI, 16 seqq.; Luke, VII, 34 seqq. A proverb which means: "The opinion of men is blind. The wisdom of the works of God is proclaimed only by his works themselves." I read ἔργων, with the manuscript B of the Vatican, and not τέκνων.

the great farmhouses, where he received an assiduous hospitality. In the East,* the house at which a stranger stops, becomes at once a public place. The whole village assembles there; the children invade it; the servants drive them away; they return continually. Jesus could not permit any to treat these artless auditors harshly; he called them to him and embraced them.† Mothers, encouraged by such a reception, brought him their nurselings that he might touch them.‡ Women came to pour oil upon his head and perfumes upon his feet. His disciples repulsed them at times as importunate; but Jesus, who loved old customs and all that indicates simplicity of heart, repaired the evil done by his too zealous friends. He protected those who desired to honor him.‖ So the children and the women adored him. The reproach of alienating from their families these delicate beings, always easily charmed away, was one of those oftenest made by his enemies.§

The infant religion was thus in many respects a movement of women and children. These last formed about Jesus, as it were, a young guard in the inauguration of his innocent royalty, and bestowed little ovations upon him with which he was much pleased, calling him "son of David," crying *Hosanna*,¶ and bearing palms around him. Jesus, like Savonarola, used them perhaps, as instruments for pious missions; he was

* Matt., xxi, 7–8.

† Matt., xix, 13 seqq.; Mark, ix, 35; x, 13 seqq.; Luke, xviii, 15-16.

‡ *Ibid.*

‖ Matt., xxvi, 7 seqq.; Mark, xiv, 3 seqq.; Luke, vii, 37 seqq.

§ Gospel of Marcion, addition to v, 2 of ch. xxiii of Luke (Epiph., *Adv. hær.*, xlii, 11). If the abridgements of Marcion have no critical value, it is not the same with his additions when they may proceed not from a prejudgment, but from the condition of the manuscripts which he used.

¶ The cry uttered in the procession of the feast of Tabernacles, while shaking palms. Mischna, *Sukka*, iv, 8. This usage still exists among the Israelites.

pleased to see these young apostles, who did not compromise him, rushing in advance, and bestowing titles upon him which he dared not take himself. He did not check them, and when asked if he heard, he responded evasively that the praise which falls from young lips is the most pleasing to God.*

He lost no occasion to repeat that the little ones are sacred beings,† that the kingdom of God belongs to the little children,‡ that it is necessary to become a little child in order to enter it,‖ that it must be received as a little child,§ that the heavenly Father hides his secrets from the wise and reveals them unto babes.¶ To him, the idea of his disciples is confounded with that of little children.** One day, when they had among themselves one of those disputes concerning precedence, which were not rare, Jesus took a little child and set him in the midst of them, and said: "Behold the greatest; whosoever shall humble himself as this little child, the same is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven."††

It was childhood, indeed, in its divine spontaneity, in its innocent sparkles of joy, which was taking possession of the earth. All believed at every moment that the kingdom so intensely longed for was on the point of appearing. Each saw himself already seated upon a throne‡‡ beside the master. They distributed the places;‖‖ they sought to compute the day. It was called the "Good News;" the doctrine had no other name. An old word, "*paradise*," which the Hebrew,

* Matt., xxi, 15–16.
† Matt., xviii, 5, 10, 14; Luke, xvii, 2
‡ Matt., xix, 14; Mark, x, 14; Luke, xviii, 16.
‖ Matt., xviii, 1 seqq.; Mark, ix, 33 seqq.; Luke, ix, 46.
§ Mark, x. 15
¶ Matt., xi, 25; Luke, x, 21.
** Matt., x, 45; xviii, 5, 14; Mark, ix, 36; Luke, xvii, 2.
†† Matt., xviii, 4; Mark, ix, 33–36; Luke, ix, 46–48.
‡‡ Luke, xxii, 30.
‖‖ Mark, x, 37, 40 41.

like all the tongues of the East, had borrowed from the Persian, and which originally designated the parks of the Achæmenides, summed up the dreams of all: a delightful garden, in which they should continue forever the enchanting life that they were leading here below.* How long did this intoxication endure? We know not. None, during the course of this wonderful advent, measured time any more than we measure a dream. Duration was suspended; a week was as a century. But whether it filled years or months, the dream was so beautiful that humanity has since lived by it, and it is our consolation yet to welcome its diminished perfume. Never did so much joy swell the breast of man. For a moment, in this effort, the most vigorous which it has ever made to raise itself above its planet, humanity forgot the leaden weight which fastens it to earth, and the woes of life here below. Blessed was he who could see with his eyes this divine outburst, and share, were it only for a day, this peerless illusion! But more blessed still would Jesus tell us, he who, disenthralled from all illusions, shall reproduce in himself the heavenly advent, and, with no millennial dream, with no chimerical paradise, with no signs in the heavens, by the righteousness of his will and the poesy of his soul, shall create anew in his heart the true kingdom of God!

* Luke, xxiii. 43; II, Cor., xii, 4. Comp. *Carm. Sibyll.*, procem., 86; Talm. of Bab, *Chagiga*, 14 *b*.

CHAPTER XII.

EMBASSY OF JOHN FROM PRISON TO JESUS.—DEATH OF JOHN.—RELATIONS OF HIS SCHOOL WITH THAT OF JESUS.

While joyous Galilee was celebrating in festivals the coming of the well-beloved, the sorrowful John, in his prison of Machero, was wasting away with waiting and with longings. The success of the young master whom he had seen some months before at his school, reached him. It was said that the Messiah predicted by the prophets, he who was to re-establish the kingdom of Israel, had come and demonstrated his presence in Galilee by his wonderful works. John wished to inquire concerning the truth of this report, and as he communicated freely with his disciples, he chose two of them to go to Jesus in Galilee.

The two disciples found Jesus at the height of his reputation. The festal air which reigned around him astonished them. Accustomed to fasts, to pertinacious prayer, to a life all aspiration, they were astounded to find themselves suddenly transported into the midst of the rejoicings of welcome.† They gave Jesus their message: "Art thou he who should come, or do we

* Matt., xi, 2 seqq.; Luke, vii, 18 seqq. † Matt., ix, 14 seqq.

look for another?" Jesus, who thenceforth had little hesitation concerning his peculiar character as the Messiah, enumerated to them the works which were to characterize the coming of the kingdom of God, the healing of the sick, the good news of speedy salvation preached to the poor. All these works he performed. "And blessed is he," he added, "whosoever shall not be offended in me." We know not whether this answer found John alive, or in what frame of mind it put the austere ascetic. Did he die comforted and certain that he whom he had announced, was already living, or had he still doubts concerning the mission of Jesus? We learn nothing in regard to this. Seeing his school continue, however, for a considerable time by the side of the Christian churches, we are led to believe that, in spite of his consideration for Jesus, John did not consider that he was to realize the divine promises. But death came to cut short his perplexities. The untamable freedom of the recluse was to crown its restless and persecuted career by the only end which was worthy of it.

The indulgent disposition which Antipater had at first shown towards John could not be of long duration. In the conversations which, according to Christian traditions, John had with the tetrarch, he constantly repeated to him that his marriage was unlawful, and that he ought to put Herodias away.* It is easy to imagine the hatred which the granddaughter of Herod the Great must have conceived for this importunate adviser. She was waiting only for an opportunity to destroy him.

* Matt., xiv, 4 seqq.; Mark, vi, 18 seqq.; Luke, iii, 19.

Her daughter, Salome, born of her first marriage, and like herself ambitious and dissolute, entered into her designs. This year (probably the year 30), Antipater happened to be on his birth-day at Machero. Herod the Great had constructed in the interior of the fortress a magnificent palace,* in which the tetrarch frequently resided. He gave a grand banquet there, during which Salome executed one of those characteristic dances which in Syria are not considered unbecoming a person of distinction. Antipater was charmed, and asked the dancer what she wished; she answered, at the instigation of her mother: "The head of John upon this charger."† Antipater was chagrined; but he would not refuse. A guard took the charger, went and cut off the head of the prisoner and brought it to her.‡

The disciples of the Baptist obtained his body, and put it in a tomb. The people were very much discontented. Six years afterwards, Hareth having attacked Antipater, to retake Machero and avenge the dishonor of his daughter, Antipater was completely beaten, and his defeat was generally regarded as a punishment for the murder of John.‖

The news of this deed was borne to Jesus by the disciples of the Baptist themselves.§ The last step which John had taken in regard to Jesus, had resulted in establishing strict lines between the two schools. Jesus, fearing an increase of ill-will on the part of Antipater, took the precaution to retire into the desert.¶

* Jos., *De Bello Jud.*, VII, VI, 2.
† Large dishes, upon which, in the East, they serve liquors and meats.
‡ Matt. XIV, 3 seqq.; Mark, VI, 14–29; Jos., *Ant.*, XVIII, V, 2.
‖ Josephus, *Ant.*, XVIII, X, 1 and 2.
§ Matt., XIV, 12.
¶ Matt., XIV, 13.

Many people followed him thither. Thanks to their extreme frugality, the sacred flock lived there; they naturally believed that they saw in that a miracle.* From this moment, Jesus never spoke of John, but with redoubled admiration. He unhesitatingly declared† that he was more than a prophet. that the Law and the ancient prophets had been in force only up to his time,‡ that he had abrogated them, but that the kingdom of heaven would abrogate him in his turn. In short, he gave him, in the economy of the Christian mystery, a peculiar place, which made him the bond of union between the Old Testament and the advent of the new reign.

The prophet Malachi, whose opinion on this enjoyed high consideration,‖ had announced with much force a precursor of the Messiah, who should prepare men for the final renewal, a messenger who should come to smooth the way before the chosen of God. This messenger was none other than the prophet Elijah, who, according to a wide-spread belief, was soon to descend from heaven, whither he had been translated, to make men ready by repentance for the great advent and reconcile God with his people.§ Sometimes with Elijah was associated either the patriarch Enoch, to whom, for one or two centuries, a lofty sanctity had been attributed,¶ or Jeremiah,** who was considered a sort of protecting genius of the people, continually praying for them before the throne of God.†† This idea of two ancient prophets who were to be re-ani-

* Matt., XIV, 15 seqq.; Mark, VI, 35 seqq.; Luke, IX, 11 seqq.; John, VI, 2 seqq
† Matt., XI, 7 seqq.; Luke, VII, 24 seqq. ‡ Matt., XI 12–13; Luke, XVI, 16.
‖ Malachi, III and IV; *Ecclesiast.*, XLVIII, 10. See above, ch. VI.
§ Matt., XI, 14; XVII, 10; Mark, VI, 15; VIII, 28; IX, 10 seqq.; Luke, IX, 8, 19.
¶ *Ecclesiastes*, XLIV, 16. ** Matt., XVI, 14. †† II Macc., XV, 13 seqq

mated in order to serve as precursors of the Messiah, is found so strikingly in the doctrine of the Parsees, that we are strongly inclined to believe it came from that quarter.* However this may be, it was, at the time of Jesus, an integral portion of the Jewish theories of the Messiah. It was admitted that the appearance of "two faithful witnesses," clad in garments of penitence, would be the prelude to the great drama which was to be unfolded to the terror-stricken Universe.†

We can understand how, with these ideas, Jesus and his disciples could not hesitate concerning the mission of John the Baptist. When the Scribes made this objection to them, that there could be no question of the Messiah, since Elias had not yet come‡, they answered that Elias had come, that John was Elias again alive.‖ By his method of life, by his opposition to established political powers, John recalled, indeed, that wonderful form of the ancient history of Israel.§ Jesus was inexhaustible upon the merits and excellence of his precursor. He said that among the children of men there was none born greater than he. He blamed the Pharisees and the doctors severely, that they had not accepted his baptism, and been converted by his voice.¶

The disciples of Jesus were faithful to these principles of their master. Respect for John was a constant tradition in the first Christian generation.** They supposed him to be a relative of Jesus.†† To found the mission of Jesus upon a testimony admitted by all, i*

* Texts cited by Anquetil-Duperron, *Zend-Avesta*, I, 2nd part, p. 46, corrected b Spiegel, in the *Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft*, I, 261 seqq. Extracts from the *Jamasp-Nameh*, in the *Avesta* of Spiegel, I, p. 34. None of th Parsee texts which really implies the idea of re-animated prophets and precursors is ancient; but the ideas contained in these texts appear much anterior to the time of their compilation. † *Rev.*, XI, 3 seqq. ‡ Mark, IX, 10.
‖ Matt., XI, 14; XVII, 10–13; Mark, VI, 15; IX, 10–12; Luke, IX, 8; John, I, 21–25.
§ Luke, I, 17. ¶ Matt., XXI, 32; Luke, VII, 29–30. ** *Acts*, XIX, 4. †† Luke, I

was related that John, when he first saw Jesus, proclaimed him the Messiah, that he recognized himself his inferior, unworthy to loose the latchets of his shoes; that he refused at first to baptize him and insisted that it was he who should be baptized by Jesus.* These were however exaggerations, which the questioning form of the last message of John sufficiently refute.† But, in a more general sense John remained in Christian legend what he was in reality, the austere preparer, the solemn preacher of penitence before the joys of the bridegroom's coming, the prophet who announces the kingdom of God and dies before seeing it. Giant of Christian origins, this eater of locusts and of wild honey, this stern redresser of wrongs, was the absinth which prepared the lips for the sweetness of the kingdom of God. The victim of Herodias opened the era of Christian martyrs; he was the first witness of the new conscience. Worldlings, who recognized in him their real enemy, could not permit him to live; his mutilated corpse, stretched across the threshold of Christianity, traced the bloody way which so many others should pass after him.

The school of John did not die with its founder. It lived for some time, distinct from that of Jesus, and at first on good terms with it. Many years after the death of the two masters, men were still baptized after the baptism of John. Some persons were at the same time members of both schools; for example, the famous Apollos, the rival of Saint Paul (about the year 50), and a considerable number of Christians of Ephesus.‡ Josephus attended (in the year 53) the

* Matt., III, 14 seqq.; Luke, III, 16; John, I, 15 seqq.; V, 32–33.
† Matt., XI, 2 seqq.; Luke, VII, 18 seqq.
‡ *Acts*, XVIII, 25; XIX 1–5. Cf. Epiph., *Adv. hær.*, XXX, 16.

school of an ascetic named Banou,* who presents the greatest resemblance to John the Baptist, and who may have been of his school. This Banou† lived in the desert, clad in the leaves of the trees; he ate only plants or wild fruits, and baptized himself in cold water frequently during the day and night to purify himself. James, he who was called the "brother of the Lord" (there is perhaps some confusion of similar names here), observed an analogous ascetism.‡ Afterwards, towards the year 80, Baptism became engaged in a struggle with Christianism, especially in Asia Minor. John the Evangelist appears to combat it in an indirect manner.‖ One of the Sybilline poems seems to proceed from this school. As to the sects of Hemerobaptists, Baptists, Elchasaites, (*Sabians*, *Mogtasila* of the Arabic writers),¶ who in the second century swarmed in Syria, Palestine, and Babylonia, and the remnants of whom yet remain among the Mendaites, called "Christians of St. John," they are of the same origin as the movement of John the Baptist, rather than the authentic succession of John. The true school of the latter, half blended with Christianity, passed into a small Christian heresy and became extinct in obscurity. John had plainly seen the direction of the future. If he had yielded to a paltry rivalry, he would now be forgotten among the multitude of the sectaries of his time. By abnegation, he achieved glory and a unique position in the religious pantheon of humanity.

* *Vita*, 2.

† Can this be the Bounai who is numbered by the Talmud (Bab., *Sanhedrin*, 43 a), among the disciples of Jesus.

‡ Hegesippus, in Eusebius, *H. E.* II, 23.

‖ John, I, 26, 33; IV, 2; I John, V, 6, Cf. *Acts*, X, 47.

§ Book IV. See especially V, 157 seqq.

¶ I recall that *Sabians* is the Aramæan equivalent of the word "Baptists." *Mogtasila* has the same meaning in Arabic.

CHAPTER XIII.

FIRST ATTEMPTS UPON JERUSALEM.

Jesus, nearly every year, went to Jerusalem to celebrate the feast of the Passover. The details of each of these journeys are little known; for the synoptics do not speak of them,* and the notes of the fourth gospel are here very confused.† It was, as it seems, in the year 31, and certainly, after the death of John, that the most important visit of Jesus to the capital took place. Many of the disciples followed him. Although Jesus attached even then little importance to the pilgrimage, he conformed in order not to wound Jewish opinions, with which he had not yet broken. These journeys, moreover, were essential to his design; for he felt already that, in order to per-

* They suppose them, however, obscurely (Matt., xxiii, 37; Luke, xiii, 34). They know as well as John the relations of Jesus with Joseph of Arimathea. Luke even (x, 38-42) knows the family of Bethany. Luke (ix, 51-54), has a vague perception of the system of the fourth Evangelist concerning the journeys of Jesus. Many discourses against the Pharisees and the Sadducees, placed by the synoptics in Galilee, have hardly any meaning except at Jerusalem. Finally, the lapse of eight days is much too short to explain all that must have happened between the arrival of Jesus in that city and his death.

† Two pilgrimages are clearly indicated (John, ii, 13, and v, 1), without speaking of the last journey (vii, 10), after which Jesus did not return into Galilee. The first had taken place while John was still baptizing. It appertained, consequently, to the passover of the year 29. But the circumstances given as of this journey are of a more advanced period. (Comp. especially John, ii, 14 seqq., and Matt., xxi, 12-13; Mark, 15-17; Luke, xix, 45-46). There are evidently transpositions of dates in these chapters of John, or more likely he has confounded the circumstances of different journeys.

form a part of the first order, he must leave Galilee and attack Judaism in its stronghold, which was Jerusalem.

The little Galilean community was here very much out of its element. Jerusalem was then nearly the same as to-day, a city of pedantry, of acrimony, of disputes, of hates, of pettiness of spirit. Fanaticism was extreme and religious seditions very frequent. The Pharisees had the mastery; the study of the Law, carried into the most insignificant minutiæ and reduced to questions of casuistry, was the only study. This culture, exclusively theological and canonical, did not contribute in any degree to polish the mind. It was somewhat analogous, to the sterile doctrine of the Moslem faquih, to that empty science which prevails about the Mosque, a great expenditure of time and dialectics utterly wasted, and with no profit to the discipline of the intellect. The theological education of the modern clergy, although very dry, can give no idea of that; for the Renaissance has introduced into all our modes of education, even the most refractory, some portion of belles-lettres and of good method, which has given scholasticism to a greater or less extent, a touch of the humanities. The science of the Jewish doctor, of the *sofer* or scribe, was purely barbarous, absurd without compensation, and stripped of every moral element.* As a crown of calamity, it filled him who had wearied himself in acquiring it, with a ludicrous arrogance. Proud of the pretended knowledge which had cost him so much labor, the Jewish scribe had the same contempt for the Greek

* We may judge it by the Talmud, the echo of the Jewish scholasticism of the time.

culture which the Mussulman savant has in our day for European civilization, and which the old Catholic theologian had for the science of the world's people. The characteristic of this scholastic culture is to close the understanding against all that is delicate, to give value only to the difficult puerilities in which life has been wasted and which are upheld as the natural occupation of persons making a profession of depth.*

This odious world could not fail to weigh very heavily upon the tender and delicate souls of the north. The contempt of the Hierosolymites for the Galileans rendered the separation still wider. In this beautiful temple, the object of their desires, they often found nothing but insult. One verse of the psalm of the pilgrims,† "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God," seemed written expressly for them. A disdainful priesthood smiled at their artless devotion, as formerly the clergy in Italy, familiarized with the sanctuaries, witnessed coldly and almost jestingly the fervor of the pilgrim come from afar. The Galileans spoke a somewhat corrupt dialect; their pronunciation was vicious; they confounded the different aspirates, which led to mistakes that occasioned great laughter.‡ In religious matters, they were considered ignorant and unorthodox;‖ the expression "Galilean block-head," had become proverbial.§ It was believed (and not without cause) that the Jewish blood was very much mixed among them, and it was considered to be an axiom that Galilee could not pro-

* Jos., *Ant.*, XX, XI. 2. † Ps. LXXXIV (Vulg., LXXXIII), 10.
‡ Matt., XXVI, 73; Mark, XIV, 70; *Acts*, II, 7; Talm. of Bab., *Erubin*, 53 *a* seqq. Bereschith rabba, 25 *c*.
‖ Passage of the treatise *Erubin*, previously cited. § *Erubin*, loc. cit., 53 *b*

duce a prophet.* Placed thus on the confines of Judaism and almost outside, the poor Galileans had only a passage of Isaiah badly interpreted† to sustain their hopes: "The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephtalim, by the way of the sea,‡ Galilee of the gentiles the people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up." The reputation of the native city of Jesus was particularly bad. It was a popular proverb: "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?"‖

The utter barrenness of nature in the environs of Jerusalem must have added to the distaste of Jesus. The valleys have no water; the soil is parched and stony. Looking down into the depression of the Dead Sea, the view is somewhat striking, otherwise it is monotonous. The hill of Mizpah alone, with its memories of the most ancient history of Israel, invites the eye. The city presented, in the time of Jesus, very nearly the same aspect that it does to-day. It had scarcely any ancient monuments, for up to the time of the Asmoneans, the Jews were still strangers to all the arts; John Hyrcanus began to embellish it, and Herod the Great had made it one of the most superb cities of the East. The Herodian constructions vied with the most finished of antiquity by their grand character, the perfection of their execution, and the beauty of the materials.§ A multitude of superb tombs, of an original taste, were built about the same time in the environs of Jerusalem.¶ The style of these

* John, VII, 52.
† IX, 1–2; Matt., IV, 13 seqq.
‡ See above, p. 163, note ‡.
‖ John, I, 46.
§ Jos., *Ant.*, XV, VIII–XI; *B. J.* V, V, 6; Mark, XII, 1–2.
¶ Tombs called Tombs of the Judges, of the Kings, of Absalom, of Zacharia

monuments was Greek, but adapted to the usages of the Jews, and considerably modified according to their principles. Ornaments of living sculpture, which the Herods permitted, to the great displeasure of the rigorists, were banished and replaced by vegetable decorations. The taste of the ancient inhabitants of Phœnicia and Palestine for monolithic monuments carved out of the solid rock, seemed to be revived in these singular tombs excavated in the rock, in which the Greek orders are so grotesquely applied to a troglodyte architecture. Jesus, who considered these works of art a pompous display of vanity, looked upon all these monuments with a reproachful eye.* His absolute spiritualism and his fixed opinion that the form of the old world was about to pass away, left him no taste save for the things of the heart.

The temple in the time of Jesus, was entirely new, and the exterior works were not yet finished. Herod had commenced its reconstruction in the year 20 or 21 before the Christian era, to make it harmonize with his other edifices. The body of the temple was finished in eighteen months, the porticoes in eight years;† but the accessory portions were continued slowly and were finished but a short time before the taking of Jerusalem.‡ Jesus probably saw men working there, not without some secret displeasure. These expectations of a long future seemed, as it were an insult to his speedy advent. More clairvoyant than the unbelievers and the fanatics he divined that these

of Jehosaphat, of St. James. Compare the description of the tomb of the Maccabees at Modin (Macc., XIII, 27 seqq.

* Matt., XXIII, 27, 29; XXIV, 1 seqq.; Mark, XIII, 1 seqq.; Luke, XIX, 44, XXI, seqq. Compare Book of Enoch, XCVII, 13-14; Talm. of Bab., *Schabbath*, 33 *b*.

† Jos., *Ant.* XV, XI, 5, 6.

‡ *Ibid.*, XX, IX, 7; John, II, 20.

superb constructions were destined for a short duration.*

The temple, however, formed a wonderfully imposing whole, of which the present *haram*,† notwithstanding its beauty, can hardly give an idea. The courts and the surrounding porticoes served daily as the rendezvous of a considerable throng, so much so that this large space was by times the temple, the forum, the tribunal and the university. All the religious discussions of the Jewish scholars, all the canonical teachings, the trials even and civil causes, in a word, all the activity of the nation, was concentrated here.‡ It was a perpetual din of argument, an arena of disputes, resounding with sophisms and subtleties. The temple had thus much similarity to a Moslem mosque. Full of respect, at this period, for strange religions, when they remained upon their own ground,‖ the Romans forbade themselves the entrance of the sanctuary; Greek and Latin inscriptions marked the point to which it was lawful for non-Jews to go.§ But the Antonia tower the head-quarters of the Roman force, commanded the whole enclosure and permitted whatever took place within to be seen.¶ The police regulations of the temple appertained to the Jews; a captain of the temple was entrusted with its superintendance, caused the gates to be opened and shut, prevented any one from crossing the enclosure with a

* Matt., xxiv, 2; xxvi, 61; xxvii, 40; Mark, xiii, 2; xiv, 58; xv, 29; Luke xxi, 6; John, ii, 19-20.

† There is no doubt that the temple and its enclosure occupied the site of the Mosque of Omar and of the *haram*, or Sacred Court, which surrounded the Mosque. The terreplein of the haram is, in some parts, especially at the place in which the Jews meet to weep, the base of the temple of Herod.

‡ Luke, ii, 46 seqq; Mischna, *Sanhedrin*, x, 2. ‖ Suet., *Aug.*, 93

§ Philo, *Legatio ad Caium*, § 31; Jos., *B. J.*, V, v, 2; VI, ii, 4; *Acts*, xxi, 28.

¶ Considerable traces of the tower of Antonia are yet seen in the northern part of the haram.

stick in his hand, with dusty shoes, while carrying packages, or to shorten the road.* Above all there was scrupulous watch that none should enter the inner porches while in a state of impurity according to the law. Women had an apartment entirely separate.

It was here that Jesus passed his days, while he remained at Jerusalem. The period of the feasts brought to this city an extraordinary influx. Gathered into messes of ten or twenty persons, the pilgrims invaded all places, and lived in that disorderly aggregation in which the East delights.† Jesus was lost in the multitude, and his poor Galileans grouped about him made but a sorry appearance. He probably felt that here he was in a hostile world which would receive him only with disdain. All that he saw repulsed him. The temple, much thronged, like places of devotion in general, presented an appearance far from edifying. The performance of the rites involved a multitude of repulsive details, especially the mercantile operations, for which actual shops were established in the sacred enclosure. Animals were sold for the sacrifices; there were also tables for the exchange of money; at times it seemed a bazaar. The lower officers of the temple doubtless performed their functions with the irreligious vulgarity which has marked sacristans in all time. This profane and careless manner in the conduct of holy things wounded the religious sentiment of Jesus, which was sometimes carried even to severity.‡ He said that they had made of the house of prayer a den of thieves. One day even, it is said,

* Mischna, *Berakoth*, IX, 5; Talm. of Bab., *Jebamoth*, 6 *b*; Mark, XI, 16.
† Jos., *B. J.*, II, XIV, 3; VI, II, 3. Comp. Ps., CXXXIII (Vulg., CXXXII).
‡ Mark, XI, 16.

overcome with indignation, he scourged these base venders and overturned their tables.* Upon the whole, he had little love for the temple. The worship which he had conceived for his Father, had nothing to do with scenes of butchery. All these old Jewish institutions displeased him, and he suffered from being obliged to conform to them. So, likewise, neither the temple nor its site inspired pious sentiments in the bosom of Christianity, save among Judaizing Christians. The real new men held in aversion this ancient sacred place. Constantine and the first Christian emperors permitted the pagan constructions of Hadrian† to remain. It was the enemies of Christianity, like Julian, who held this place in esteem.‡ When Omar entered Jerusalem the site of the temple had been purposely profaned out of hate to the Jews.‖ Islam, that is to say, a sort of resurrection of Judaism in its exclusively Semitic form, restored its honors. This place has always been anti-Christian.

The arrogance of the Jews completed the discontent of Jesus, and rendered life in Jerusalem painful to him. In proportion as the grand ideas of Israel matured, the priesthood declined. The institution of synagogues had given to the interpreter of the Law, the doctor, great superiority over the priest. There were priests only in Jerusalem, and there even, reduced to functions entirely ritual, much like our parish priests who are excluded from preaching, they were over-awed by the orator of the synagogue, the

* Matt., XXI, 12 seqq.; Mark. XI, 15 seqq.; Luke, XIX, 45 seqq.; John, II, 14 seqq.
† *Itin. a Burdig. Hierus.*, p. 152 (edit. Schott); St. Jerome, in Is., II, 8, and in Matt., XXIV, 15.
‡ Ammianus Marcellinus, XXIII, 4.
‖ Eutychius, *Ann.*, II, 286 seqq. (Oxford, 1659).

casuist, the *sofer* or scribe, layman as he was. The celebrated men of the Talmud are not priests; they are learned men according to the ideas of the time. The high priest of Jerusalem held, it is true, a rank very elevated in the nation, but he was by no means at the head of the religious movement. The sovereign pontiff, whose dignity had already been degraded by Herod,* became more and more a Roman functionary,† who was recalled frequently in order to render the charge profitable to many. Opposed to the Pharisees, highly exalted lay zealots, the priests were nearly all Sadducees, that is to say, members of this incredulous aristocracy which had formed around the temple and lived by the altar, but saw its vanity.‡ The sacerdotal caste was separated so widely from the national sentiment and the great religious tide which swayed the people, that the name of Sadducee (*Sadoki*), which at first designated simply a member of the sacerdotal family of Sadok, had become synonymous with "materialist" and "Epicurean."

A still worse element had begun, since the reign of Herod the Great, to corrupt the high-priesthood. Herod having become enamoured of Mariamne, daughter of Simon, himself the son of Boëthus of Alexandria, and desiring to marry her (towards the year 28 B. C.), saw no other way to ennoble his father-in-law and raise him to his own level, but by making him high-priest. This intriguing family continued master almost without interruption, of the sovereign pontificate for thirty-five years.‖ Closely allied to the reigning family, it lost it only after the deposition of Archelaus.

* Jos., *Ant.*, XV, III, 1, 3. † Jos., *Ant.*, XVIII, 11;
‡ *Acts*, IV, 1 seqq.; V, 17; Jos., *Ant.*, XX, IX, 1; *Pirke Aboth*, I, 10.
‖ Jos., *Ant.*, XV, IX, 3; XVII, VI, 4; XIII, 1; XVIII, I, 1; II, 1; XIX, VI, 2; VIII, 1

laus, and recovered it (A. D. 42) after Herod Agrippa had for some time been restoring the work of Herod the Great. Under the name of *Boethusim*,* was thus formed a new sacerdotal nobility, very worldly and little devout, which almost coalesced with the Sadokites. The *Boethusim*, in the Talmud and the rabbinical writings, are set forth as a species of infidels and always in company with the Sadducees.† From all this resulted about the temple a species of Court of Rome, living by politics, little sympathetic with excesses of zeal, dreading them even, indisposed to hear of holy personages or of innovators, for its profit lay in the established routine. These epicurean priests had not the violence of the Pharisees; they cared only for repose; it was their moral carelessness, their chilling irreligion at which Jesus revolted. Although very different, the priests and the Pharisees were thus united in his antipathies. But, a stranger and without influence, he was long compelled to lock his discontent within himself, and to communicate his sentiments only to the intimate society which accompanied him.

Before the last visit, which was by far the longest of all that he made to Jerusalem, and which terminated in his death, Jesus endeavored, however, to make himself heard. He preached; he was talked of; people spoke about certain acts which were considered mirac-

* This name is found only in the Jewish documents. I think that the "Herodians" of the Gospel are the *Boethusim*.

† Treatise *Aboth Nathan*, 5; *Soferim*, III, hal., 5; Mischna, *Menachoth*, X, 3; Talm. of Bab., *Schabbath*, 118 *a*. The name of the *Boethusim* is often exchanged in the Talmudic books with that of the Sadducees, or with the word *Minim* (heretics). Compare Thosiphta *Joma* I, with Talm. of Jerus., same treatise, I, 5, and Talm. of Bab., same treatise, 19 *b*; Thos. *Sukka*, III, with Talm. of Bab., same treatise, 48 *b*; Thos. *ibid.*, farther on, with Talm. of Bab., same treatise, 48 *b*; Thos. *Rosch-hasschana*, I, with Mischna, same treatise, II, 1, Talm of Jerus., same treatise, II, 1, and Talm. of Bab., same treatise, 22 *b*; Thos. *Menachoth*, X, with Mischna, same treatise, X, 3; Talm. of Bab., same treatise, 65 *a*, Mischna, *Chagiga*, II, 4, and Megillath Taanith, I; Thos. *Iadaim*, II, with Talm of Jerus., *Baba Bathra*, VIII, 1, Talm. of Bab., same treatise, 115 *b* and Megillath Taanith, V.

ulous. But from all this resulted no established church at Jerusalem, no group of Hierosolymite disciples. The charming teacher, who pardoned all if they only loved him, found feeble echo in this sanctuary of vain disputes and obsolete sacrifices. Its result to him was only certain advantageous relations, the fruits of which he afterwards reaped. It does not appear that he then made the acquaintance of the family of Bethany which gave him, in the midst of the trials of his last months, so much consolation. But at an early period he attracted the attention of a certain Nicodemus, a rich Pharisee, member of the Sanhedrin, and much thought of at Jerusalem.* This man, who appears to have been honorable and earnest, felt an attraction towards the young Galilean. Not wishing to compromise himself, he came to see him by night, and had a long conversation.† He received, doubtless, a favorable impression from it, for at a later period he defended Jesus against the accusations of his fellow Pharisees,‡ and, after the death of Jesus, we find him surrounding with his pious cares the dead body of the master.‖ Nicodemus did not become a Christian; he thought it due to his position not to enter into a revolutionary movement, which as yet numbered no notable adherents. But he bore evidently much friendship for Jesus, and rendered him some services, though unable to snatch him from a death the fiat of which, at the period which we have now reached, was already written.

* It seems that there is some question concerning him in the Talmud. Talm of Bab., *Taanith*, 20 *a*; *Gittin*, 56 *a*; *Ketuboth*, 66 *b*; treatise *Aboth Nathan*, VII; Midrasch rabba, *Ekа*. 64 *a*. The passage *Taanith* identifies him with Bounai, who, according to *Sanhedrin* (see above, p. 194, note †), was a disciple of Jesus. But if Bounai is the Banou of Josephus, this conjunction is without force.

† John III, 1 seqq; VII, 50. We are certainly at liberty to believe that the text even of the conversation is only a creation of John.

‡ John, VII, 50 seqq. ‖ John, XIX, 39.

As to the famous doctors of the time, Jesus appears not to have had any communication with them. Hillel and Schammai were dead; the greatest authority of the time was Gamaliel, grandson of Hillel. He was liberal in mind, and a man of the world, open to profane studies, and inclined to tolerance by his intercourse with the best society.* Contrary to the strict Pharisees, who walked veiled or with closed eyes, he looked at women, even pagans.† Tradition pardoned this to him, as well as his knowledge of Greek, because he had access to the court.‡ After the death of Jesus, he expressed very moderate views concerning the new sect.‖ St. Paul came from his school.§ But it is highly probable that Jesus never entered it.

One idea at least Jesus carried away from Jerusalem, an idea which from this time forth appears rooted in him, that there is no compromise possible with the ancient Jewish religion. The abolition of the sacrifices which had caused him so much disgust, the suppression of an impious and haughty priesthood, and in a general sense the abrogation of the Law appeared to him an absolute necessity. From this moment, he takes the position no longer of the Jewish reformer, but of a destroyer of Judaism. Some of the partisans of Messianic ideas had already supposed that the Messiah would bring a new law, which would be common to the whole earth.¶ The Essenes, who were hardly Jews, appear also to have been indifferent to the temple and to the Mosaic observances. But this hardi-

* Mischna; *Baba Metzia*, v, 8; Talm. of Bab., *Sota*, 49 *b*
† Talm. of Jerus., *Berakoth*, iv, 2.
‡ Passage *Sota*, previously cited, and *Baba Kama*, 83 *a*.
‖ *Acts*, v, 34 seqq. § *Acts*, xxii, 3.
¶ *Orac. sib.*, b. iii, 573 seqq.; 715 seqq.; 756-58. Compare the Targum of Jonathan, Is. xii, 3.

hood was only isolated or not avowed. Jesus first dared to say that from his time, or rather from that of John,* the Law existed no more. If he sometimes used terms more discreet,† it was that he might not shock received prejudices too violently. When he was pushed to an issue, he put aside all veils, and declared that the Law was no longer in force. He made use on this subject of strong comparisons: "Men do not mend," he said, "old with new. They do not put new wine into old bottles."‡ See now in practice his acts as a master and a creator. This temple excluded non-Jews from its pale by contemptuous placards. Jesus cares not for it. Jesus declares that all men of good will, all men who welcome and love him, are children of Abraham.‖ Pride of blood seems to him the chief enemy to be fought. Jesus, in other words, is no longer a Jew. He is a revolutionist of the highest grade; he calls all men to a religion founded solely upon their childhood to God. He proclaims the rights of man, not the rights of the Jew; the religion of man, not the religion of the Jew; the deliverance of man, not the deliverance of the Jew.§ Ah! we are far from a Juda, the Gaulonite, a Mathias Margaloth, preaching revolution in the name of the Law! The religion of humanity, established not upon race, but upon the heart, is founded. Moses is obsolete the temple has no longer any reason to be and is irrevocably doomed.

* Luke, xvi, 16. The passage in Matthew, xi, 12-13, is less clear, but can hav no other meaning.

† Matt., v, 17 18 (Cf. Talm. of Bab., *Schabbath*. 116 *b*). This passage is not in contradiction with those in which the abolition of the Law is implied. It signifies only that in Jesus all the types of the Old Testament are accomplished. Cf Luke, xvi, 17.

‡ Matt., ix, 16-17; Luke, v, 36 seqq.

‖ Luke, xix, 9.

§ Matt., xxiv, 14; xxviii 19; Mark, xiii, 10; xvi, 15 Luke, xxiv, 47.

CHAPTER XIV.

RELATIONS OF JESUS WITH THE PAGANS AND THE SAMARITANS.

In accordance with these principles, he disdained everything which was not the religion of the heart. The vain practices of devotees,* external rigorism, which relies upon grimaces for salvation, found in him a mortal enemy. He concerned himself little about the fasts † He preferred the forgiveness of an injury to a sacrifice.‡ The love of God, charity, mutual forgiveness, this is all his law.‖ Nothing less priestly. The priest, by reason of his profession, urges always to public sacrifice, of which he is the necessary minister; he diverts from private prayer, which is a means of dispensing with him. We should search the Gospel in vain for a religious rite commanded by Jesus. Baptism has to him but a secondary importance;§ and as to prayer, it avails nothing unless it comes from the heart. Many, as it always happens thought to replace by the willingness of weak souls the true love of the right, and imagined that they

* Matt., xv, 9. † Matt., ix 14; xi, 19
‡ Matt., v, 23 seqq.; ix, 13; xii, 7.
‖ Matt., xxii, 37 seqq.; Mark, xii, 28 seqq; Luke; x, 25 seqq.
§ Matt., xi, 15 I Cor., i, 17.

could conquer the kingdom of heaven by saying to him, "*Rabbi, Rabbi;*" he repelled them, and proclaimed that his religion was to do well.* He often cited this passage from Isaiah: "This people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me."†

The Sabbath was the cardinal point upon which was reared the edifice of pharisaical scruples and subtilties. This ancient and transcendant institution had become a pretext for miserable disputes to the casuists, and a source of superstitious beliefs.‡ It was believed that nature observed it; all intermittent springs were considered "sabbatical."‖

It was this point also upon which Jesus was most pleased to defy his adversaries.§ He openly violated the Sabbath, and responded to the reproaches which it brought upon him with cutting raillery. With stronger reason he contemned a multitude of modern observances, which tradition had added to the Law, and which, from this very fact, were most dear to the bigoted. Ablutions, fine-drawn distinctions between things pure and impure, he could not abide; "Can you also, said he to them, wash your souls? Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man, but that which cometh out of his heart."¶ The Pharisees, the propagators of these mummeries, were the mark of all his blows. He accused them of overdoing the Law, of inventing impossible precepts in order to create among men occasions of sin; "Blind leaders of the

* Matt., VII, 27; Luke, VI, 46.

† Matt., XV, 8; Mark, VII, 6. Cf. Isaiah, XXIX, 13.

‡ See especially the treatise *Schabbath* of the Mischna, and the *Book of the Jubilee* (translated from the Ethiopian in the *Jahrbucher* of Ewald, 2 and 3), ch. L.

‖ Jos., *B. J.*, VII, v, 1; Pliny, *H. N.*, XXXI, 18. Cf. Thomson, The Land and the Book, I, 406 seqq.

§ Matt., XII, 1–14; Mark, II, 23–28; Luke, VI, 1–5; XIII, 14 seqq.; XIV, 1 seqq.

¶ Matt., XII, 34; XV, 1 seqq.; 12 seqq.; XXIII, entire; Mark, VII, 1 seqq.; 15 seqq. Luke, VI, 45; XI, 39 seqq.

blind, said he, take heed lest ye fall into the ditch."— "Generation of vipers," added he in private, "they speak none but good things, but within they are bad; they belie the proverb: 'Of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.'"

He did not know enough of the Gentiles to think of founding upon their conversion anything substantial. Galilee contained a great number of pagans, but not, it would seem, any public and organized worship of false gods.* Jesus might have seen this worship flaunting in all its splendor in the country of Tyre and Sidon, at Cesarea-Philippi, and in Decapolis.† He paid little attention to it. We never see in him that wearisome pedantry of the Jews of his day, these declamations against idolatry, so familiar to his co-religionists since Alexander, and which fill, for example, the book of "Wisdom."‡ What strikes him in the pagans, is not their idolatry, but their servility.‖ The young Jewish democrat, in this a brother of Juda the Gaulonite, admitting no master but God, was deeply wounded at the honors with which the persons of sovereigns were surrounded, and the titles, often mendacious, which were given them. Aside from this, in most cases, where he meets pagans, he shows great indulgence toward them; at times he declares that he has greater hopes of them than of the Jews.§ The kingdom of God will be transferred to them. "When

* I believe that the pagans of Galilee were found mostly on the frontiers, at Kadès, for example, but that the very heart of the country, the city of Tiberias excepted, was wholly Jewish. The line where the ruins of temples end and the ruins of synagogues begin, is now clearly marked as high as lake Huleh (Samachonitis). The traces of pagan sculpture which it is believed have been found at Tell Hum, are doubtful. The coast, and especially the town of Acre do not form part of Galilee.

† See above, p. 153.

‡ Chap. XIII seqq.

‖ Matt., XX, 25; Mark, X, 42; Luke, XXII, 25.

§ Matt., VIII, 5 seqq.; XV, 22 seqq; Mark, VII, 25 seqq.; Luke, IV, 25 seqq.

the lord of a vineyard is dissatisfied with those to whom he has let it, what does he do? He lets it to others, who bring him good fruits."* Jesus would cleave so much the more strongly to this idea, as the conversion of the Gentiles was, according to Jewish ideas, one of the most certain signs of the coming of the Messiah.† In his kingdom of God, men sit at the feast, by the side of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, who have come from the four winds of heaven, while the legitimate heirs of the kingdom are excluded.‡ Often, it is true, we apparently find in the commands which he gives his disciples a directly contrary tendency; he seems to charge them to preach salvation only to the orthodox Jews;‖ he speaks of pagans in a manner conformable to the prejudices of the Jews.§ But we must remember that the disciples, whose narrow understanding did not comprehend this lofty indifference to the condition of the sons of Abraham, may well have caused the instructions of their master to bend considerably in the direction of their own ideas. Besides, it is very possible that Jesus varied upon this point, even as Mahomet speaks of the Jews, in the Koran, sometimes in the most honorable way, sometimes with extreme harshness, accordingly as he hopes to attract them or not to him. Tradition indeed attributes to Jesus two rules of proselytism in direct contradiction, which he may have practised by turns; "He that is not against us is for us:"—"He that is

* Matt., xxi, 41; Mark, xii, 9; Luke, xx, 16.
† Is., ii, 2 seqq.; lx; Amos ix, 11 seqq.; Jerem., iii, 17, Malach., i, 11; *Tobit*, xiii, 13 seqq.; *Orac. Sibyl.*, iii, 715 seqq. Comp. Matt., xxiv, 14; *Acts*, xv. 15 seqq.
‡ Matt., viii, 11–12; xxi, 33 seqq.; xxii, 1 seqq.
‖ Matt., vii, 6; x, 5–6; xv, 24; xxi, 43.
§ Matt., v, 46 seqq.; vi, 7, 32; xviii, 17; Luke, vi, 32 seqq; xii, 30.

not with me is against me."* An impassioned struggle almost necessarily leads to such contradictions.

It is certain that he numbered among his disciples many whom the Jews called "Hellenes."† This word had, in Palestine, very different meanings. It designated sometimes pagans, sometimes Jews speaking Greek and living among pagans, sometimes people of pagan origin converted to Judaism.‖ Probably it is in this last category of Hellenes that Jesus found sympathy.§ Affiliation to Judaism had many degrees; but proselytes were always inferior to Jews by birth. Those of whom we now speak were called "proselytes of the gate," or "people fearing God," and were in subjection to the precepts of Noah, not to the Mosaic precepts.¶ This very inferiority was doubtless the cause which brought them nearer to Jesus and secured them his favor.

He dealt in the same way with the Samaritans. Hemmed in like an islet, between the two great provinces of Judaism (Judea and Galilee), Samaria formed in Palestine a kind of independent territory, which preserved the old worship of Garizim, the brother and rival of that of Jerusalem. This poor sect, which had neither the genius nor the wise organization of Judaism proper, was treated by the Hierosolymites with extreme severity.** They were placed upon the same level with the pagans, with one degree more of hatred.††

* Matt., XII, 40.; Mark, IX, 30; Luke, IX, 50; XI, 23.

† Josephus says so expressly (*Ant.*, XVIII, III, 3). Comp. John, VII, 35; XII, 20–21.

‡ Talm. of Jerus., *Sota*, VII: 1.

‖ See in particular, John, VII, 3 ; XII, 20; *Acts*, XIV, 1; XVII, 4; XVIII, 4; XXI, 28.

§ John, XII, 20; *Acts*, VII, 27.

¶ Mischna, *Baba metsia*, IX, 12; Talm. of Bab., *Sanh.* 56 *b*; *Acts*, VIII, 27; X, 2, 22, 35; XIII, 16, 26, 43, 50; XVI, 14; XVII, 4, 17; XVIII, 7; Galat., II, 3; Jos., *Ant.*, XIV, VII, 2.

** *Ecclesiastes*, L, 27–28; John, VIII, 48; Jos., *Ant.*, IX, XIV, 3; XI, VIII, 6 XII, V, 5; Talm. of Jerus., *Aboda zara*, V, 4; *Pesachim*, I, 1.

†† Matt., X, 5; Luke, XVII, 18. Comp. Talm. of Bab., *Cholin*, 6 *a*.

Jesus, by a sort of opposition, was kindly disposed towards them. Often he prefers Samaritans to orthodox Jews. If, in other cases, he seems to forbid his disciples to go and preach to them, reserving his Gospel for the pure Israelites,* this also is undoubtedly a precept dictated by circumstances, to which the apostles may have given too absolute a meaning. Sometimes, indeed, the Samaritans gave him an ill-reception, because they supposed him imbued with the prejudices of his co-religionists;† just as in our days the European free-thinker is viewed as an enemy by the Mussulman, who always believes him a fanatical Christian. Jesus rose above these misconceptions.‡ He had many disciples at Sichem, and he spent there at least two days.‖ In one instance, he finds gratitude and true piety only in a Samaritan.§ One of his most beautiful parables is that of the man wounded upon the road to Jericho. A priest passes him, sees him and continues his way. A Levite passes and does not stop. A Samaritan has pity on him, goes to him, pours oil into his wounds, and binds them up.¶ Jesus concludes from this that true fraternity is established among men by charity, not by religious faith. The "neighbor," who in Judaism was only the co-religionist, is to him that man who has pity on his kind without distinction of sect. Human brotherhood in the broadest sense overflows from all his teachings.

These thoughts, which beset Jesus on his departure from Jerusalem, found living expression in an anecdote which has been preserved on his return. The road from Jerusalem to Galilee passes within half an hour's journey of Sichem,** before the opening of the valley

* Matt., x, 5-6. † Luke, ix, 53. ‡ Luke, ix, 56. ‖ John, iv, 39-43.
§ Luke, xvii 16 seqq. ¶ Luke, x, 30 seqq. ** Now Naplous

overlooked by Mounts Ebal and Garizim. This route was in general avoided by the pilgrim Jews, who made the long circuit of Peræa in their journeys rather than to expose themselves to the affronts of the Samaritans or to ask anything of them. It was unlawful to eat or drink with them;* it was an axiom of certain casuists that "a bit of the Samaritans' bread is swine's flesh."† When they took that route, they supplied themselves with provisions in advance; yet they rarely avoided quarrels and ill-treatment.‡ Jesus partook neither of these scruples nor these fears. Reaching on his journey the point where the valley of Sichem opens upon the left, he felt weary, and stopped near a well. The Samaritans had, then as now, the custom of giving to all the places in their valley, names drawn from patriarchal remembrances; they regarded this well as having been given by Jacob to Joseph; it was probably the very same which is even yet called *Bir-Iakoub*. The disciples entered the valley and went to the town to buy provisions; Jesus seated himself upon the brink of the well, looking towards Garizim.

It was about noon. A woman of Sichem came to draw water. Jesus asked to drink, which excited great astonishment in the woman, the Jews ordinarily interdicting themselves from all dealing with the Samaritans. Won over by the conversation of Jesus, the woman recognized in him a prophet, and, expecting reproaches upon her worship, she took the lead: "Lord," said she, "our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say that Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." "Woman, believe me," Jesus responded to her, "the hour cometh when ye

* Luke, IX, 53; John, IV, 9. † Mischna, *Schebiit*, VIII, 10.
‡ Jos., *Ant.*, XX, V, 1; *B. J.*, II, XII, 3; *Vita*, 52.

shall worship neither in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem, but when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth."*

On the day when he pronounced these words, he was indeed the son of God. He for the first time gave utterance to the idea upon which shall rest the edifice of the everlasting religion. He founded the pure worship, of no age, of no clime, which shall be that of all lofty souls to the end of time. Not only was his religion, that day, the benign religion of humanity, but it was the absolute religion; and if other planets have inhabitants endowed with reason and morality, their religion cannot be different from that which Jesus proclaimed at Jacob's well. Man has not been able to abide by this worship; we attain the ideal only for a moment. The words of Jesus were a gleam in thick night; it has taken eighteen hundred years for the eyes of humanity (what do I say! of an infinitely small portion of humanity) to learn to abide it. But the gleam shall become the full day, and, after passing through all the circles of error, humanity will return to these words, as to the immortal expression of its faith and its hopes.

* John, iv, 21–23. Verse 22, at least the last clause, which expresses a thought opposed to that of verses 21-23, appears to have been interpolated. We cannot insist very strongly upon the historic value of such a conversation, since Jesus alone, or the woman could have related it. But the anecdote of chapter iv of John certainly represents one of the most characteristic ideas of Jesus, and the greater part of the circumstances of the recital have a striking stamp of truth.

CHAPTER XV.

COMMENCEMENT OF THE LEGEND OF JESUS—HIS OWN IDEA OF HIS SUPERNATURAL MISSION.

Jesus returned to Galilee having completely lost his Jewish faith, and in full revolutionary ardor. His ideas are now expressed with perfect clearness. The innocent aphorisms of his first prophetic age, borrowed in part from preceding masters, the beautiful moral teachings of his second period, result in a decided policy. The law is to be abolished; he himself is to abolish it.* The Messiah has come; he himself is the Messiah. The kingdom of God is soon to reveal itself; by him it is to be revealed. He knows well that he will be the victim of his hardihood; but the kingdom of God cannot be conquered without violence; it is by crises and anguish that it must be established.† The Son of man, after his death, will come in glory, accompanied by legions of angels, and those who have denied him shall be confounded.

The boldness of such a conception must not surprise us. Jesus had long considered the relation between

* The hesitation of the immediate disciples of Jesus, a considerable portion of whom remained attached to Judaism, might here give rise to some objections. But the trial of Jesus leaves no room for any doubt. We shall see that he was there treated as a "seducer." The Talmud gives the method followed against him as an example of that which ought to be followed against "seducers," who seek to overturn the Law of Moses (Talm. of Jerus., *Sanhedrin*, XIV, 16; Talm of Bab., *Sanhedrin*, 43 *a*, 67 *a*).

† Matt., XI, 12; Luke, XVI, 16

himself and God, that between a son and a father. What in others would have been insupportable arrogance, in him cannot be treated as unlawful.

The title of "son of David," was the first that he accepted, probably without being concerned in the innocent frauds by which it was sought to secure it to him. The family of David had become, it would seem, long since extinct;* the Asmoneans had never sought to attribute to themselves such a descent; neither Herod nor the Romans dreamed for a moment that there was among them any representative whatever of the rights of the ancient dynasty. But since the end of the Asmoneans, the dream of an unknown descendant of the old kings, who should avenge the nation of its enemies, agitated all minds. The universal belief was that the Messiah would be a son of David, born, like him, at Bethlehem.† The first idea of Jesus was not precisely that. The memory of David, which preoccupied the mass of the Jews, had nothing in common with his kingdom of heaven. He believed himself the son of God, and not the son of David. His kingdom, and the deliverance which he meditated were of an entirely different order. But popular opinion on this point, did him a species of violence. The immediate consequence of this proposition: "Jesus is the Messiah," was this other proposition: "Jesus is the son of David!" He submitted to receive a title without which he could hope for no success. He finally, it seems, took pleasure in it, for he performed most graciously those mir-

* It is true that certain doctors, such as Hillel and Gamaliel, are given as being of the race of David. But these are very doubtful allegations. If the family of David still formed a distinct and well-known group, how happens it that we never see it figuring by the side of the Sadokites, the Boethuses, the Asmoneans, or the Herods in the great struggles of the times?

† Matt., II, 5-6; XXII, 42; Luke, I, 32; John, VII, 41-42; *Acts*, II, 30.

acles which were sought of him in this name.* Here, as in many other circumstances of his life, Jesus conformed to the ideas which were current in his time, although they were not precisely his own. He associated with his dogma of the "kingdom of God," all that warmed the heart and the imagination. Thus have we seen him adopt the baptism of John, which, however, could have been of no great importance to him.

A grave difficulty presented itself; his birth at Nazareth, which was a matter of public notoriety. We do not know whether Jesus attempted to answer this objection. Perhaps it was not made in Galilee, where the idea that the son of David must be a Bethlehemite, was less common. To the idealistic Galilean, moreover, the title of "son of David," was sufficiently justified, if he to whom it was given, renewed the glory of his race, and brought back again the great days of Israel. Did he, by his silence, authorize the fictitious genealogies which his partisans imagined, in order to prove his royal descent.† Did he know anything of the legends invented to fix his birth at Bethlehem, and in particular of the feat by which his Bethlehemite origin was connected with the assessment made by the imperial legate, Quirinius?‡ We do not know. The inexactitude and the contradictions of the genealogies,‖ induce the belief that they were the result of a popular labor, working at different points,

* Matt., IX, 27; XII, 23; XV, 22; XX, 30-31; Mark, X, 47, 52; Luke, XVIII, 38.

† Matt., I, seqq.; Luke, III, 23 seqq.

‡ Matt., II, 1 seqq.; Luke, II, 1 seqq.

‖ The two genealogies are altogether discordant, and conform little to the lists of the Old Testament. The recital of Luke as to the assessment of Quirinius implies an anachronism. See above, p. 6, note ‖. It is natural, however, that the tradition should have seized upon this circumstance. The assessments impressed the Jews very strongly, overturned their narrow ideas, and were long remembered. Cf. *Acts*, V, 37.

and that none of them were sanctioned by Jesus.* Never did he designate himself with his own lips as the son of David. His disciples, much less enlightened than he, heightened at times what he said of himself; oftenest he had no knowledge of these exaggerations. We must add that during the three first centuries, large portions of Christianity† obstinately denied the royal descent of Jesus, and the authenticity of the genealogies.

His legend was thus the fruit of a great, altogether spontaneous conspiracy, and was worked out about him while he was yet alive. No great event of history has passed without giving rise to a cycle of fables, and Jesus could not, had he wished, have silenced these popular creations. Perhaps a sagacious eye could have recognized, even then, the germ of the stories which were to attribute to him a supernatural birth, either in consequence of the notion generally received in antiquity, that the extraordinary man cannot be born of the ordinary relations between the sexes; or to fulfil a misunderstood chapter of Isaiah,‡ in which a prophecy was seen, that the Messiah should be born of a virgin; or finally to carry out the idea that the "Breath of God," already set up in the divine hypostasis, is a principle of fecundity.‖ Even then, perhaps, there circulated concerning his childhood, more than one anecdote intended to show in his biography the accomplishment of the Messianic ideal,§ or,

* Julius Africanus (in Eusebius, *H. E.*, I, 7) supposes that it was the relatives of Jesus, refugees in Batanea, who essayed to recompose the genealogies.

† The Ebionim, the "Hebrews," the "Nazarenes," Tatian, Marcion. Cf Epiph., *Adv. hær.*, XXIX, 9; XXX, 3, 14; XLVI, 1; Theodoret, *Hæret. fab.*, I, 20; Isidorus of Pelusium, Epist., I, 371; ad Pansophium.

‡ Matt., I, 22-3.

‖ Genesis, I, 2. For an analogous idea among the Egyptians, see Herodotus (II, 28; Pomp. Mela, I, 9; Plutarch, *Quest. symp.*, VIII, I, 3; *De Isid., et Osir.*, 42

§ Matt., I, 15, 23; Is., VII, 14 seqq.

to speak more correctly, of the prophecies which the allegorical exegesis of the time applied to the Messiah. At other times, there were created for him relations from the cradle with celebrated men, John the Baptist, Herod the Great, Chaldean astrologers, who, it was said, about that time made a journey to Jerusalem,* two aged persons, Simeon and Anna, who had left memories of lofty sanctity.† A rather loose chronology presided over these combinations, which were for the most part founded upon real occurrences distorted.‡ But a singular spirit of sweetness and of goodness, a profoundly popular sentiment, penetrated all these fables, and made them a supplement to the teachings.‖ After the death of Jesus especially, such stories were largely developed; we may believe, however, that they were already in circulation while he was living, without encountering anything more than a pious credulity and an artless wonder.

That Jesus had never thought of passing for an incarnation of God, we cannot doubt. Such an idea was extremely foreign to the Jewish mind; there is no trace of it in the synoptic gospels;§ we find it indicated only in portions of the gospel of John which cannot be accepted as an echo of the thought of Jesus. Sometimes even Jesus seems to take precautions to repel such a doctrine.¶ The accusation that he made himself God or the equal of God is presented, even in the Gospel of John, as a calumny of the Jews.** In

* Matt., II, 1 seqq. † Luke, II, 25 seqq.

‡ Thus the legend of the Massacre of the Innocents probably relates to some cruelty of Herod with regard to Bethlehem. Comp. Jos., *Ant.*, XIV, IX, 4.

‖ Matt., I and II; Luke, I and II; St. Justin, *Dial. cum Tryph.*, 78, 106; *Protevang* of James (*apocr.*), 18 seqq.

§ Certain passages, like *Acts*, II, 22, exclude it expressly.

¶ Matt., XIX, 17; Mark, X, 18; Luke, XVIII, 19.

** John, V, 18 seqq.; X, 33 seqq.

this last gospel, he declares that he is less than his Father.* Besides, he avows that the Father has not revealed all things to him.† He believes himself more than an ordinary man, but separated from God by an infinite distance. He is the son of God; but all men are so or may become so in diverse degrees.‡ All men, every day, ought to call God their father; all the resurrected will be sons of God.‖ The divine filiation was attributed in the Old Testament to beings for whom was made no pretention of equality with God.§ The word "son" has, in the Semitic tongues, and in the language of the New Testament, the largest range of meaning.¶ Besides, the idea which Jesus forms of man is not this humble idea which a cold deism has introduced. In his poetic conception of nature, one breath only penetrates the universe; the breath of man is that of God; God dwells in man and lives by man, even as man dwells in God and lives by God.** The transcendant idealism of Jesus never permitted him to have a very clear idea of his own personality. He is his Father; his Father is he, He lives in his disciples; he is everywhere with them;†† his disciples are one, as he and his Father are one.‡‡ The idea to him

* John, XIV, 28. † Mark, XIII, 35.

‡ Matt., V, 9, 45; Luke, III, 38; VI, 35; XX, 36; John, I, 12-13; X, 34-35, Comp. *Acts*, XVII, 28-29; Rom., VIII, 14, 19, 21; IX, 16; II Cor., VI, 18; Galat., III, 26, and in the Old Testament, *Deut.*, XIV, 1, and especially Wisdom, II, 13, 18.

§ Luke, XX, 36.

‖ Gen., VI, 2; Job, I, 6; II, 1; XXVIII, 7; Ps., II, 7; LXXXII, 6; II Sam., VII, 14

¶ The son of the devil (Matt., XIII, 38; *Acts*, XIII, 10); the sons of this world (Mark, III, 17; Luke, XVI, 8; XX, 34); the sons of light (Luke, XVI, 8; John, XII, 36); the sons of the resurrection (Luke, XX, 36; the sons of the kingdom (Matt. VIII, 12. XIII, 38); the sons of the bridegroom (Matt., IX, 15, Mark, II, 19 Luke, V, 34); the sons of Gehenna (Matt., XXIII, 15); the sons of peace (Luke, X 6), etc. Bear in mind that the Jupiter of paganism is πατὴρ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε.

** Comp. *Acts*, XVII, 28. †† Matt., XVIII, 20; XXVIII, 20.

‡‡ John, V, 30; XVII, 21. See in general the last discourses of John, especially ch. XVII, which very well express one phase of the psychological state of Jesus, although we cannot regard these as genuine historical documents.

is everything; the body, which makes the distinction of persons, is nothing.

The title of "Son of God" or simply of "Son,"* thus became to Jesus a title analogous to "Son of man," and, like it, a synonym of "Messiah," with this difference only, that he called himself "Son of man," and that he does not seem to have made the same use of the expression "Son of God."† The title Son of man expressed his character as judge; that of Son of God his participation in the supreme designs and his power. This power has no limits. His Father has given him all power. He has a right to change even the Sabbath.‡ None knows the Father except through him.‖ The Father has transmitted to him the exclusive right to judge.§ Nature obeys him; but she also obeys whoever believes and prays; faith can accomplish all things.¶ We must remember that no idea of the laws of Nature existed in his mind, or in the minds of his auditors, to mark the limits of the possible. The witnesses of his miracles thanked God "for having given such power to men."** He forgives sins;†† he is superior to David, to Abraham, to Solomon, and to the prophets.‡‡ We know neither under what form nor to what extent these affirmations were produced. Jesus cannot be judged by the rule of our petty propriety. The admiration of his disciples overwhelmed him and carried him away. It is evident that the title of *Rabbi*, with which he was at first content, did not longer suffice; the title of prophet even

* The passages in support of this are too numerous to be given here.
† It is only in the Gospel of John that Jesus makes use of the expression "Son of God" or "Son" in speaking of himself. ‡ Matt., XII, 8; Luke, VI, 5.
‖ Matt., XI, 27. § John, V, 22. ¶ Matt., XVII, 18-19; Luke, XVII, 6.
** Matt., IX, 8. †† Matt., IX, 2 seqq.; Mark, II, 5 seqq.; Luke, V, 20; VII, 47-48
‡‡ Matt., XII, 41-42; XXII, 43 seqq.; John, VIII, 52-seqq.

or of messenger of God did not now respond to his idea. The position which he attributed to himself was that of a superhuman being, and he wished to be regarded as having a more elevated communion with God than other men. But we must remark that these words "superhuman" and "supernatural" borrowed from our narrow theology, had no meaning in the high religious consciousness of Jesus. To him, nature and the development of humanity were not limited kingdoms outside of God, pitiful realities, subjected to the laws of a hopeless empiricism. Nothing was supernatural to him, for there was no nature. Intoxicated with infinite love, he forgot the heavy chain which holds the spirit captive; he overleaped at one bound the abyss, insurmountable to the multitude, which the mediocrity of the human faculties traces between man and God.

We do not deny that there was in these affirmations of Jesus the germ of the doctrine which was afterwards to make him a divine hypostasis,* identifying him with the Word, or "second God,"† or eldest son of God,‡ or *Metathronic Angel*,‖ which the Jewish theology created on another hand. A species of necessity led this theology, in order to correct the extreme

* See especially John, XIV seqq. But it is doubtful whether we have here the authentic teaching of Jesus.

† Philo cited in Eusebius, *Præp. Evang.*, VII, 13.

‡ Philo *De migr. Abraham*, § 1; *Quod deus immut.*, § 6; *De confus. ling.*, §§ 14 and 28; *De profugis*, § 20; *De Somniis*, I, § 37; *De agric. Noe*, § 12; *Quis rerum divin' hæres*, § 25 seqq.; 48 seqq., etc.

‖ Μετάθρονος, that is to say, sharing the throne of God; a species of divine recorder, keeping the register of merits and of demerits; *Bereschith Rabba*, v, 6*c*; Talm of Bab., *Sanhedr.*, 38*b*; *Chagiga*. 15 *a*; Targum of Jonathan, *Gen.*, v, 24.

§ This theory of the Λόγος contains no Greek elements. The comparisons which some have made between it and the *Honover* of the Parsees are also without foundation. The *Minokhired* or "Divine Intelligence" has much analogy with the Λόγος of the Jews. (See the fragments of the book entitled *Minokhired* in Spiegel. *Parsi-Grammatik*, p. 161-162.) But the development which the doctrine of the *Minokhired* has received among the Parsees is modern, and may im

rigor of the ancient monotheism, to place near God an assistant judge, to whom the Eternal Father was reputed to delegate the government of the universe. The belief that certain men are incarnations of divine faculties or "powers," was wide-spread; the Samaritans had about this time a wonder-worker named Simon, who was identified with "the great power of God."* For nearly two centuries, the speculative minds of Judaism had yielded to the propensity to make distinct personalities of the divine attributes or of certain expressions which related to the divinity. Thus the "Breath of God," which is often mentioned in the Old Testament, is considered as a separate being, the "Holy Spirit." In the same way, the "Wisdom of God," the "Word of God," become persons existing by themselves. This was the germ of the process which has engendered the *Sephiroth* of the Cabbala, the *Æons* of Gnosticism, the Christian hypostases, all this dry mythology, consisting of personified abstractions, to which monotheism is obliged to have recourse, when it would introduce multiplicity into the idea of God.

Jesus appears to have remained a stranger to these refinements of theology, which were very soon to fill the world with sterile discussions. The metaphysical theory of the Word, as we find it in the writings of his cotemporary Philo, in the Chaldean Targums, and previously in the book of "Wisdom,"† is not percep-

ply a foreign influence. The "Divine Intelligence" (*Mainyu Khratu*) figures in the Zend books; but it does not serve there as the basis of a theory; it enters only into certain invocations. The comparisons which have been attempted between the Alexandrian theory of the Word and certain points of the Egyptian theology are not without value. But nothing indicates that in the centuries which preceded the Christian era, Palestinian Judaism had borrowed anything from Egypt.

* *Acts*, VIII, 10.

† IX 1-2; XVI, 12. Comp. VII, 12; VIII, 5 seqq.; IX, and in general IX-XI. These prosopopœia of personified Wisdom are found in books far more ancient. *Prov.* VIII, IX; *Job*, XXVIII.

tible either in the *Logia* of Matthew, or in general in the synoptics, interpreters so authentic of the words of Jesus. The doctrine of the Word, indeed, had nothing in common with Messianism. The Word of Philo and of the Targums is in no wise the Messiah. It is John the Evangelist or his school, who afterwards sought to prove that Jesus is the Word, and who created from this stand-point an entirely new theology, very different from that of the kingdom of God.* The essential character of the Word is that of creator and of providence; now Jesus never claimed to have created the world, nor to govern it. His portion will be to judge it, to renew it. The character of judge of the final assizes of humanity, such is the essential attribute which Jesus attributes to himself, the character which all the first Christians gave him.† Till that great day he sits at the right of God as his *Metathrone*, his prime minister and his future avenger.‡ The superhuman Christ of the Byzantine apsides, seated as judge of the world, in the midst of the apostles, who are analogous to himself and superior to the angels who only stand and wait, is the exact representation of that conception of the "Son of man," the first traits of which we find so strongly indicated already in the Book of Daniel.

At any rate, the rigor of a premeditated scholasticism belonged in no wise to such a world. The whole mass of ideas which we have set forth formed in the minds of the disciples a theological system so far from fixed, that they make the Son of God, this species of

* John, I, 1-14; I John, V, 7; *Rev.*, XIX, 13. It will be remembered, moreover, that, in the Gospel of John, the expression of "Word" does not recur out of the prologue, and that the narrator never places it in the mouth of Jesus

† *Acts*, X, 42.

‡ Matt., XXVI, 64; Mark, XVI, 19, Luke, XXII, 69; *Acts*, VII, 55; Rom., VIII, 34, Ephes., I, 20; Coloss., III, 1; Heb. I, 3, 13; VIII, 1; X, 12; XII, 2. I Pet., III, 22. See the passages previously cited in regard to the position of the Jewish *Metatharonos*.

divine reduplication, act merely as man. He is tempted; he is ignorant of many things; he corrects himself;* he is dejected, discouraged, he asks his Father to spare him trials; he submits to God like a son.† He who is to be the judge of the world, knows not the day of judgment.‡ He takes precautions for his safety.‖ Shortly after his birth, it is necessary to secrete him to avoid mighty men who desired to kill him.§ In exorcisms, the devil wrangles with him and does not go at first.¶ In his miracles, a painful effort is perceived, a weariness as if something had gone out of him.** All this is simply the work of a messenger of God, a man protected and favored of God.†† We must ask here neither logic nor consistency. The need that Jesus had to yield himself to the faith and enthusiasm of his disciples, piled up contradictory notions. To the Messianists of the millenarian school, to the excited readers of the books of Daniel and Enoch, he was the Son of man; to the Jews of the common faith, to the readers of Isaiah and Micah, he was the Son of David; to the affiliated he was the Son of God, or simply the Son. Others, without being blamed for it by the disciples, believed him John the Baptist alive again, Elias, or Jeremiah, according to the popular belief that the ancient prophets should awaken to prepare the way of the Messiah.‡‡

An absolute conviction, or to speak more correctly, enthusiasm, which deprived him even of the possibility of doubt, covered all this hardihood. We can but

* Matt., x, v, compare with xxviii, 19.
† Matt., xxvi, 39; John, xii. 27.
‡ Mark, xiii, 32.
‖ Matt., xii, 14-16; xiv, 13; Mark, iii, 6-7; ix, 29-30; John, vii, 1 seqq.
§ Matt., ii, 20.
¶ Matt., xvii, 20; Mark, ix, 25.
** Luke, 45-46; John, xi, 33, 38.
†† *Acts*, ii, 22.
‡‡ Matt., xiv, 2; xvi, 14; xvii, 3 seqq.; Mark, vi, 14 15; viii, 28; Luke, ix, 8 seqq.; 19.

feebly comprehend, with our cold and timorous natures, such a manner of being possessed by the idea of which he makes himself the apostle. To us, races profoundly serious, conviction means sincerity with ourselves. But sincerity with ourselves has not much meaning among the Eastern nations, who are little accustomed to the delicacy of the critical mind. Good faith and imposture are words which, in our rigid conscience, are opposed like two irreconcilable terms. In the East, between the two there are a thousand subterfuges, a thousand evasions. The authors of the apocryphal books, (of "Daniel" and of "Enoch," for example,) exalted as they were, committed for their cause, and most certainly without the shadow of a scruple, an act which we should call a forgery. Material truth has very little value to the Oriental; he sees everything through his ideas, his interests and his passions.

History is impossible, unless we resolutely admit that there are many degrees of sincerity. All great things are achieved by the people; now the people are led only by yielding to their ideas. The philosopher who, knowing this, isolates and intrenches himself in his nobility, is greatly to be praised. But he who takes humanity with its illusions, and seeks to act upon it and with it, cannot be blamed. Cæsar knew very well that he was not the son of Venus; France would not be what she is, had she not believed for a thousand years in the sacred ampulla of Rheims. It is easy for us, impotent as we are, to call this falsehood, and, proud of our timid honesty, to treat with contempt the heroes who accepted under other conditions the battle of life. When we shall have done with our

scruples what they did with their falsehoods, we shall have the right to be severe upon them. At least we must make a broad distinction between societies like our own, in which everything takes place in the maturity of reflection, and the simple and credulous societies in which the faiths were born which have mastered the centuries. There is no great foundation which does not repose upon a legend. The only guilt in such a case, is that of humanity which will be deceived.

CHAPTER XVI.

MIRACLES.

Two means of proof only, miracles and the fulfilment of the prophecies, could, in the opinion of the cotemporaries of Jesus, establish a supernatural mission. Jesus, and especially his disciples, employed these two methods of demonstration with perfect good faith. For a long time Jesus had been convinced that the prophets had written only in view of him. He found himself in their sacred oracles; he looked upon himself as the mirror in which all the prophetic spirit of Israel had read the future. The Christian school, perhaps even during the life of its founder, sought to prove that Jesus corresponded perfectly to all that the prophets had predicted of the Messiah.* In many cases the correspondences were altogether exterior, and are hardly cognizable to us. It was usually fortuitous or insignificant circumstances in the life of the Master that reminded the disciples of certain passages of the Psalms and prophets, in which, by reason of their constant pre-occupation, they saw references to him.† The exegesis of the times thus consisted almost

* For example, Matt., I, 22; II, 5-6, 15, 18; IV, 15.

† Matt., I, 23; IV, 6, 14; XXVI, 31, 54, 56; XXVII, 9, 35; Mark, XIV, 27; XV, 28; John, XII, 14-15; XVIII, 9; XIX, 19, 24, 28, 36.

entirely in plays upon words, and in citations made in an artificial and arbitrary manner. The synagogue had no list officially fixed of the passages which related to the future reign. The Messianic applications were free, and constituted much rather artifices of style than a serious mode of argument.

As to miracles, they were considered, at that time, the indispensible mark of the divine and the sign of the prophetic calling. The legends of Elijah and Elisha were full of them. It was the received opinion that the Messiah would perform many.* A few miles from the place where Jesus dwelt, in Samaria, a magician named Simon created for himself by his illusions a character almost divine.† Afterwards, when it was desired to found the fame of Apollonius of Tyana and to prove that his life had been the visit of a God to the earth, it was thought that in order to succeed in this, a vast round of miracles must be invented as his work.‡ The Alexandrian philosophers themselve, Plotinus and the rest, are reputed to have performed them.‖ Jesus had therefore to choose between these two alternatives, either to renounce his mission, or to become a wonder-worker. We must remember that all antiquity, with the exception of the great scientific schools of Greece and their Roman adepts, accepted miracles; that Jesus, not only believed in them, but had not the least idea of a natural order governed by laws. His knowledge on this point was in no wise superior to that of his cotemporaries. Moreover, one of his most deeply rooted opinions was

* John, VII, 31; IV *Esdras*, XIII. 50. † *Acts*, VIII, 9 seqq.
‡ See his biography by Philostratus.
‖ See the Lives of the Sophists, by Eunapius; the Life of Plotinus, by Porphyry; that of Proclus, by Marinus; that of Isidorus, attributed to Damascius.

that with faith and prayer man has all power over nature.* The faculty of performing miracles was considered a licence regularly imparted by God to men,† and was not at all surprising.

Time has changed into something very grievous to us that which was the power of the great founder, and if ever the worship of Jesus grows feeble in the heart of humanity, it will be because of those very acts which made men believe on him. Criticism experiences before these historical phenomena no embarrassment. A thaumaturgist of our days, unless of extreme simplicity, as has been the case among certain outcasts of Germany, is detestable; for he performs miracles without believing in them; he is a charlatan. But if we take a Francis d'Assisi, the question is altogether changed; the miraculous cycle of the birth of the order of St. Francis, far from shocking us, causes us real pleasure. The founders of Christianity lived in a state of poetic ignorance at least as complete as St. Clare and the *tres socii*. They thought it very natural that their master should have interviews with Moses and Elias, that he should command the elements, and that he should heal the sick. We must remember besides, that every idea loses something of its purity when it aspires to realization. We never succeed but that the delicacy of the soul experiences some shocks. Such is the feebleness of the human mind, that the best causes are ordinarily gained only for bad reasons. The demonstrations of the primitive expounders of Christianity repose upon the poorest arguments. Moses, Columbus and Mahomet, triumphed over obstacles only by taking into consideration each day the

* Matt., xvii, 19; xxi, 21-22; Mark, xi, 23-24. † Matt., ix, 8.

weakness of men and by not always giving the true reasons of the truth. It is probable that the assemblage about Jesus was more struck by his miracles than by his teachings so deeply divine. We must add that undoubtedly popular fame, before and after the death of Jesus, enormously exaggerated the number of acts of this kind. The types of the evangelical miracles, indeed, do not present much variety; they repeat each other and seem traced over a very small number of patterns, fitted to the taste of the country.

It is impossible, among the miraculous stories, the wearisome enumeration of which the Gospels contain, to distinguish the miracles which have been attributed to Jesus by popular opinion from those in which he consented to take an active part. It is impossible above all to know whether the ungracious circumstances of exertion, groans, and other traits characteristic of jugglery,* are really historic or are the fruit of the belief of the compilers, much inclined to magic, and living, in this respect, in a world analogous to that of the "spirits" of our days.† Almost all the miracles which Jesus thought he performed appear to have been miracles of healing. Medicine was at that time in Judea what it still is in the East, that is to say in no respect scientific, but absolutely abandoned to individual inspiration. Scientific medicine, founded five centuries before by Greece, was, in the time of Jesus, unknown to the Jews of Palestine. In such a condition of knowledge, the presence of a superior man, treating the sick with gentleness, and giving him

* Luke, VIII, 45-46; John, XI, 33, 38.

† *Acts*, II, 2 seqq.; IV, 31; VIII, 15 seqq; X, 44 seqq. For nearly a century, the apostles and their disciples thought only of miracles. (See the *Acts*, the writings of St. Paul, the extracts of Papias, in Eusebius, *Hist. Eccl.*, III, 39, etc. Comp. Mark, III, 15; XVI, 17-18, 20.

by some sensible signs the assurance of his recovery, is often a decisive remedy. Who dare say that in many cases, and apart from injuries of a decided character, the contract of an exquisite person is not worth all the resources of pharmacy? The pleasure of seeing him heals.* He gives what he can, a smile, a hope, and that is not unavailing.

Jesus had no idea of a rational medical science any more than his cotemporaries; he believed with all the world that cures were to be effected by religious rites, and such a faith was perfectly logical. From the moment that disease is regarded as the punishment of a sin,† or the work of a demon,‡ not the result of physical causes, the best physician was the holy man, who possessed power in the supernatural realm. Healing was considered a moral act; Jesus, who felt his moral force, must have believed himself specially endowed for healing. Persuaded that the touch of his garment,‖ the imposition of his hands,§ did good to the sick, he would have been unfeeling had he refused to the suffering an alleviation which it was in his power to accord. The cure of the sick was considered one of the signs of the kingdom of God, and always associated with the emancipation of the poor.¶ Both were signs of the great revolution which was to end in the redress of all infirmities.

One of the cures which Jesus oftenest performs, is exorcism, or the casting out of devils. A singular readiness to believe in demons reigned in all minds. It was a universal opinion, not only in Judea, but in

* John, v, 14; ix, 1 seqq., 34.
† Matt., ix, 32–33; xii, 22; Luke, xiii, 11, 16.
‡ Luke, viii, 45–46.
§ Matt., xi, 5; xv, 30-31; Luke, ix, 1-2, 6.
‖ Luke, iv, 40.

the whole world, that demons take possession of certain persons and make them act contrary to their own will. A persian *div*, named many times in the Avesta,* *Aeschma*, *daëva*, "the div of concupiscence," adopted by the Jews under the name of Asmodeus,† became the cause of all hysterical troubles among women.‡ Epilepsy, the mental and nervous diseases‖ in which the patient seems to have lost all self-control, infirmities the cause of which is not apparent, like deafness and dumbness,§ were explained in the same manner. The admirable treatise of Hippocrates, "On the Sacred Disease," which founded, four centuries and a half before Jesus, the true principles of medicine upon that subject, had not banished from the world so great an error. It was supposed that there were processes more or less efficacious for driving away demons; the vocation of exorcist was a regular profession like that of the physician.¶ There is no doubt that Jesus had, during his lifetime, the reputation of possessing the deepest secrets of that art.** There were then many lunatics in Judea, doubtless because of the great spiritual exaltation. These lunatics, who were permitted to wander about, as is still the case in the same regions, lived in the abandoned sepulchral caves, the common retreat of vagrants. Jesus had great effect upon these unfortunates.†† There were told on

* *Vendidad*, XI, 26; *Yacna*, X, 18.

† *Tobit*, III, 8; VI, 14; Talm. of Bab., *Gittin*, 68 *a*.

‡ Comp. Mark, XVI, 9; Luke, VIII, 2; Gospel of the Infancy, 16, 33; Syrian Code, published in the *Anecdota Syriaca* of M. Land, I, p. 1-2

‖ Jos., *B. J.*, VII, VI, 3; Lucian *Philopseud.*, 16; Philostratus, Life of Apoll., III, 38; IV, 20; Aretæus, *De causis morb. chron.*, I, 4.

§ Matt., IX, 33; XII, 22; Mark, IX, 16, 24. Luke, XI, 14.

¶ *Tobit*, VIII, 2-3; Matt., XII, 27; Mark, IX, 38; *Acts*, XIX, 13; Josephus, *Ant.*, VIII, II, 5; Justin, *Dial. cum Tryphone*, 85; Lucian, Epigr., XXIII (XVII Dindorf).

** Matt., XVII, 20; Mark, IX, 24 seqq.

†† Matt., VIII, 28; IX, 34; XII, 43 seqq.; XVII, 14 seqq., 20; Mark, V, 1 seqq.; Luke, VIII, 27 seqq.

the subject of his cures a multitude of strange stories, in which all the credulity of the time gave itself full scope. But here again we must not exaggerate the difficulties. The disorders which they explained as possessions were often very slight. At the present day in Syria, those are regarded as lunatics or possessed of a demon, (these two ideas are but one, *medjnoun**), who are only somewhat singular. A gentle word often sufficed in this case to drive away the demon. Such were doubtless the means employed by Jesus. Who knows whether his celebrity as an exorcist did not spread about without his knowing it? Persons who reside in the East are sometimes surprised to find themselves, after a little time, in possession of great renown as physician, sorcerer, or discoverer of treasures, without being able to get any satisfactory account of the facts which have given rise to these strange imaginings.

Many circumstances moreover seem to indicate that Jesus was a thaumaturgist only at a late period and against his will. Oftentimes he performed his miracles not until after solicitation, with a manifest disinclination, and while reproaching those who ask them for the grossness of their understanding.† A singularity apparently inexplicable, is the care he takes to do his miracles privately, and the injunction which he gives to those whom he heals to tell it to no man.‡ When the demons desire to proclaim him son of God, he forbids them to open their mouths; it is in spite of him

* This phrase, *Dæmonium habes* (Matt., xi, 18; Luke, vii, 33; John, vii, 20; viii, 48 seqq.; x, 20 seqq.), should be translated by "Thou art mad," as they say in Arabic, *Medjnoun ente*. The verb δαιμονᾶν has also, in all classic antiquity, the sense of "to be a lunatic."

† Matt., xii, 39; xvi, 4; xvii, 16; Mark, viii, 17 seqq.; ix, 18; Luke, ix, 41

‡ Matt., viii, 4; ix, 30–31; xii, 16 seqq.; Mark, i, 44; vii, 24 seqq.; viii, 26

self that they confess him.* These traits are especially prominent in Mark, who is above all the Evangelist of miracles and exorcisms. It seems that the disciple who furnished the principal materials for that Gospel importuned Jesus by his admiration for prodigies, and that the master, annoyed by a reputation which he felt to be a burden, often said to him: "Speak not of them." Once, this discord culminated in a singular explosion,† an outburst of impatience, in which we perceive the weariness which these perpetual demands of feeble minds caused him. One would say, at times, that the part of the thaumaturgist is disagreeable to him, and that he seeks to give as little publicity as possible to the marvels which grow, as it were, under his feet. When his enemies ask of him a miracle, especially a celestial miracle, a meteor, he obstinately refuses.‡ We are then permitted to believe that his reputation as a miracle-worker was imposed upon him, that he did not resist it very much, but that he did nothing to aid it, and that at all events he felt the emptiness of public opinion in this regard.

It would be departing from right historic methods to listen too much in this to our repugnances, and in order to evade the objections which might be raised against the character of Jesus, to suppress facts which, in the eyes of his cotemporaries, were of the first order. It would be agreeable to say that these are additions of disciples far inferior to their master, who, unable to conceive his true grandeur, have sought to elevate him by illusions unworthy of him. But the four nar-

* Mark, I, 24-25, 34; III, 12; Luke, IV, 41.
† Matt., XVII, 16; Mark, IX, 18; Luke, IX, 41.
‡ Matt., XII, 38 seqq.; XVI, 1 seqq.; Mark, VIII, 11.
‖ Josephus, *Ant.*, XVIII, III, 3.

rators of the life of Jesus are unanimous in vaunting his miracles; one of them, Mark, the interpreter of the apostle Peter,* insists so strongly upon this point that, if the character of Christ were traced exclusively according to his Gospel, he would be represented as an exorcist in possession of charms of rare efficacy, as a very powerful sorcerer, who inspires terror, and of whom men are glad to be rid.† We will admit, therefore, unhesitatingly that acts which would now be considered traits of illusion or of hallucination, figured largely in the life of Jesus. Must we sacrifice to this unpleasant aspect of such a life its sublime aspect? Let us beware of it. A mere sorcerer after the manner of Simon the Magician, could not have brought about a moral revolution like that which Jesus accomplished. If the miracle-worker had effaced in Jesus the moral and religious reformer, there would have sprung from him a school of magic, and not Christianity.

The problem, moreover, is presented in the same manner as to all saints and religious founders. Things which are to-day diseases, such as epilepsy and visions, were once an element of force and greatness. Medical science can tell the name of the malady which made the fortune of Mahomet.‡ Almost down to our day, the men who have done most for the good of their kind (the excellent Vincent de Paul himself!) have been, whether they wished it or not, thaumaturgists. If we start with this principle, that every historic per-

* Papias, in Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.*, III, 39.

† Mark, IV, 40; V, 15. 17, 33, 36; VI, 50; X, 32. Cf. Matt., VIII, 27, 34; IX, 8; XIV, 27; XVII, 6-7; XXVIII, 5, 10; Luke, IV, 36; V, 17; VIII, 25, 35, 37; IX, 34. The Apocryphal Gospel called that of Thomas the Israelite carries this character to the most shocking absurdity. Compare the *Miracles of Infancy*, in Thilo, *Cod. Apocr. N. T.*, p. CX, note.

‡ *Hysteria muscularis*, of Schœnlein.

sonage to whom acts have been attributed, which we in the nineteenth century hold to be senseless or charlatanic, has been a lunatic or a charlatan, the canons of criticism are violated. The school of Alexandria was a noble school, and yet it abandoned itself to the practice of an extravagant thaumaturgy. Socrates and Pascal were not exempt from hallucinations. Facts are to be explained by causes which are proportioned to them. The weaknesses of the human mind engender only weakness; great things have always great causes in the nature of man, although often they are produced with a cortege of littlenesses which, to superficial understandings, obscure their grandeur.

In a general sense, it is therefore true to say that Jesus was a miracle-worker and an exorcist only in spite of himself. Miracles are ordinarily the work of the public even more than of him to whom they are attributed. Jesus obstinately refused to perform prodigies which the multitude had created for him; and it would have been the greatest miracle had he not performed any; never would the laws of history and of popular psychology have suffered more downright abrogation. The miracles of Jesus were a violence done him by his time, a concession which the necessity of the hour wrung from him. So the exorcist and the miracle-worker have fallen; but the religious reformer shall live forever.

Even those who did not believe on him were struck by these acts, and sought to witness them.* The pagans and the rude common people experienced a feeling of fear, and besought him to depart from their re-

* Matt., XIV, 1 seqq.; Mark, VI, 14; Luke, IX, 7; XXIII, 8.

gion.* Many thought perhaps to use his name for seditious movements.† But the altogether moral and not at all political direction of the character of Jesus saved him from these entanglements. His peculiar kingdom was in the circle of children which a similar childlikeness of imagination and a like foretaste of heaven had gathered and held about him.

* Matt., VIII, 34; Mark, V, 17; VIII, 37. † John, VI, 14-15.

CHAPTER XVII.

DEFINITIVE FORM OF THE IDEAS OF JESUS ON THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

We suppose that this last phase of the activity of Jesus endured about eighteen months, from his return from the pilgrimage to the passover of the year 31, to his journey for the feast of the Tabernacles in the year 32.* During this period, the ideas of Jesus do not appear to have been enriched by any new element; but all that was in him was developed and produced with an ever increasing degree of force and of boldness.

The fundamental idea of Jesus was, from the first day, the establishment of the kingdom of God. But this kingdom of God, as we have already said, Jesus seems to have understood in very different senses. At times, he would be taken for a democratic chief, desiring simply the reign of the poor and the disinherited At other times, the kingdom of God is the literal accomplishment of the apocalyptic visions of Daniel and Enoch. Often, finally, the kingdom of God is the kingdom of souls; and the approaching deliverance is

* John, v, 1; vii, 2. We follow the system of John, according to whom the public life of Jesus lasted three years. The synoptics, on the contrary, group all the facts within the compass of a year.

the deliverance by the spirit. The revolution desired by Jesus is then that which really occurred, the establishment of a new worship, purer than that of Moses. —All these thoughts appear to have existed at some time in the mind of Jesus. The first, however, that of a temporal revolution, does not appear long to have fixed his attention. Jesus never regarded the earth, nor the riches of the earth, nor material power as worthy of his regard. He had no worldly ambition. Sometimes, by a natural consequence, his great religious importance was on the point of changing into social importance. People came to him to ask that he would constitute himself a judge and arbiter in material questions. Jesus repelled these propositions haughtily, almost as insults.* Full of his celestial ideal, he never emerges from his disdainful poverty. As to the two other conceptions of the kingdom of God, Jesus appears always to have preserved them both. If he had been only an enthusiast, led astray by the apocalypses upon which the popular imagination fed, he would have remained an obscure sectary, inferior to those whose ideas he followed. If he had been only a puritan, a sort of Channing or "Savoyard Vicar," he would not, beyond contradiction, have obtained any success. The two parts of his system, or, to speak more properly, his two conceptions of the kingdom of God, sustained each other, and this reciprocal support produced his incomparable success. The first Christians were visionaries, living in a circle of ideas which we should call dreams; but at the same time they were the heroes of the social war which has ended in the enfranchisement of the conscience and the estab-

* Luke, xii, 13-14.

lishment of a religion whence the pure worship, announced by the founder, will at length come forth.

The apocalyptic ideas of Jesus, in their most complete form, may be epitomized thus: The end of the present order of humanity is at hand. This end will be an immense revolution, "an anguish," like to the pains of child-birth; a *palingenesis* or "regeneration" according to the word of Jesus himself),* preceded by sombre calamities and announced by strange phenomena.† On that great day, the sign of the Son of Man will burst forth in the heavens; it will be a vision terrible and luminous as that of Sinai, a great tempest rending the sky, a bolt of fire flashing in the twinkling of an eye from the East to the West. The Messiah will appear in the clouds, clothed in glory and majesty, with the sound of trumpets, surrounded by angels. His disciples will sit by his side upon thrones. The dead will then arise, and the Messiah will proceed to the judgment.‡

In this judgment, men will be separated into two categories, according to their works.‖ The angels will execute the sentence.§ The chosen will enter into a delightful dwelling-place which has been prepared for them from the beginning of the world;¶ there they

* Matt., XIX, 28.

† Matt., XXIV, 3 seqq.; Mark, XIII, 4 seqq.; Luke, XVII, 22 seqq.; XXI, 7 seqq. It should be remarked that the picture of the end of time here attributed to Jesus by the synoptics contains many touches which correspond with the siege of Jerusalem. Luke wrote some time after the siege (XXI, 9, 20, 24). The compilation of Matthew, on the contrary, carries us back to the time of the siege, or very little afterwards. Unquestionably, however, Jesus announced great terrors as necessarily preceding his second advent. These terrors were an integral portion of all the Jewish apocalypses. Enoch, XCIX c. CII, CIII (division of Dillman); *Carm. Sibyll.*, III, 34 seqq.; 638 seqq.; IV, 168 seqq.; V, 511 seqq. In Daniel also, the reign of the Saints will come only after the desolation shall have been complete (VII, 25 seqq.; VIII, 23 seqq.; IX, 26-27, XII, 1).

‡ Matt., XVI, 27; XIX, 28; XX, 21; XXIV, 30 seqq.; XXV, 31 seqq.; XXVI, 64, Mark, XIV, 62; Luke, XXII, 30; I Cor., XV, 52; I Thess., IV, 15 seqq.

‖ Matt., XIII, 38 seqq.; XXV, 33. § Matt., XIII, 39, 41, 49.

¶ Matt., XXV, 34. Comp. John, XIV 2.

will sit, clothed in light, at a feast presided over by Abraham,* the patriarchs and the prophets. This will be the smaller number.† The others will go into *Gehenna*. Gehenna was the valley west of Jerusalem. At various periods the worship of fire had been practiced in it, and the place had become a sort of cloaca. Gehenna is therefore in the mind of Jesus a dismal valley, foul and full of fire. Those excluded from the kingdom will be burned and gnawed by worms in company with Satan and his rebel angels.‡ There, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.‖ The kingdom of God will be like a closed hall, lighted up within, in the midst of this world of darkness and of torment.§

This new order of things will be eternal. Paradise and Gehenna shall have no end. An impassable abyss separates them one from the other.¶ The Son of man, seated at the right hand of God, will preside over this final condition of the world and of humanity.**

That all this was understood literally by the disciples and the Master himself at certain moments, stands forth, absolutely evidenced in the writings of the time. If the first Christian generation has any deep and constant faith, it is, that the world is on the point of coming to an end,†† and that the grand "revelation"‡‡

* Matt., VIII, 11; XIII, 43; XXVI, 29; Luke, XXIII, 28; XVI, 22; XXII, 30.

† Luke, XIII, 23 seqq.

‡ Matt., XXV, 41. The idea of the fall of the angels, so largely developed in the Book of Enoch, was universally admitted in the circle of Jesus. Jude, 6 seqq.; II Ep. attributed to Saint Peter, II, 4, 11; *Rev.* XII, 9; John, VIII, 44.

‖ Matt., V, 22; VIII, 12; X, 28; XIII, 40, 42, 50; XVIII, 8; XXIV. 51; XXV, 30; Mark, IX, 43, etc.

§ Matt., VIII, 12; XXII, 13; XXV, 30. Comp. Jos., *B. J.*, III, VIII, 5

¶ Luke, XVI, 28.

** Mark, III, 29; Luke, XXII, 69; *Acts*, VII, 55.

†† *Acts*, II, 17; III, 19 seqq.; I Cor. XV, 23-24, 52; I Thess., III, 13; IV, 14 seqq.; V, 23; II Thess., II, 8; I Tim., VI, 14; II Tim., IV. 1; Tit., II, 13; James, V, 3, 8; Jude, 18; II Pet., III entire; Revelations entire, and especially I, 1; II, 5, 16, III, 11; XI, 14; XXII, 6, 7, 12, 20. Comp. IV Esdras, IV, 26.

‡‡ Luke, XVII, 30; I Cor., I, 7-8; II Thess., I 7; I Pet., I, 7, 13; Rev., I, 1.

of Christ is soon to take place. This startling proclamation: "The time is at hand!"* which opens and closes the Apocalypse, this appeal incessantly repeated, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear,"† are the cries of hope and of rallying throughout the apostolic age. A Syriac expression, *Maran atha*, "Our Lord is coming."‡ became a sort of password which the believers exchanged to fortify themselves in their faith and their hopes. The Apocalypse, written in the year 68 of our era,‖ fixes the term at three years and a half.§ The "Ascension of Isaiah"¶ adopts a calculation very nearly approaching this.

Jesus never undertook such precision. When interrogated as to the time of his coming, he always refused to respond; once even he declared that the date of this great day is known only to the Father, who has revealed it neither to the angels nor to the Son.** He said that the time when the kingdom of God was watched for with anxious curiosity was precisely that in which it would not come.†† He repeated incessantly that it would be a surprise as in the time of Noah and of Lot; that they must be upon their guard always ready to go; that each should watch and have his lamp burning as for a marriage procession, which comes unexpectedly;‡‡ that the Son of man would come as a thief, in an hour when they looked not for him:‖‖ that he would appear as the lightning, that

* Rev., I, 3; XXII, 10.

† Matt., XI, 15; XIII, 9, 43; Mark, IV, 9, 23; VII, 16; Luke, VIII, 8; XIV, 35; Rev. II, 7, 11, 27, 29; III, 6, 13, 22; XIII, 9. ‡ I Cor., XVI, 22.

‖ Rev., XVII, 9 seqq. The sixth Emperor, whom the author gives as reigning, is Galba. The dead Emperor, who should return is Nero, whose name is given in figures (XIII, 18). § Rev., XI, 2, 3; XII, 14. Comp. Daniel, VII, 25; XII, 7.

¶ Chap. IV, V, 12 and 14. Comp. Cedrenus, p. 68 (Paris, 1647).

** Matt., XXIV, 36; Mark, XIII, 32.

†† Luke, XVII, 20. Comp. Talm. of Bab., *Sanhedrin*, 97 *a*.

‡‡ Matt., XXIV, 36 seqq.; Mark, XIII, 32 seqq.; Luke, XII, 35 seqq.; XVII, 20 seqq.

‖‖ Luke, XII, 40; II Pet., III, 10.

lighteneth from one part of heaven to the other.* But his declarations as to the proximity of the catastrophe are unmistakable.† "This generation shall not pass away," said he, "till all these things be fulfilled. There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death till they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."‡ He blames those who do not believe in him because they are not able to read the signs of the coming reign: "When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red. And in the morning, It will be foul weather to-day: for the sky is red and lowering. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?"‖ By an illusion common to all great Reformers, Jesus imagined the end much nearer than it really was; he did not take into account the slowness of the movements of humanity; he imagined he was to realize in one day that which eighteen hundred years later was not yet to be achieved.

These declarations, formal as they were, preoccupied the Christian family for almost sixteen hundred years. It was accepted that some of the disciples should see the day of final revelation before death. John in particular was considered as being of this number;§ many believed that he would never die. Perhaps this was a later opinion produced towards the close of the first century by the advanced age to which John seems to have arrived, this age having given occasion for the belief that God intended to preserve him indefinitely until the great day, in order to realize the dec-

* Luke, xvii, 24.
† Matt., x, 23; xxiv-xxv entire, and especially xxiv, 29, 34; Mark, xiii, 30 Luke, xiii, 35; xxi, 28 seqq
‡ Matt., xvi, 28; xxiii, 36, 39; xxiv, 34; Mark, viii, 38; Luke, ix, 27; xxi, 32.
‖ Matt., xvi, 2-4; Luke, xii, 54-56. § John, xxi, 22-23.

laration of Jesus. Be this as it may, at his death the faith of many was unsettled, and his disciples gave to the prediction of Christ a modified meaning.*

At the same time that Jesus fully accepted the apocalyptical beliefs, as they are found in the Jewish apocryphal books, he accepted the dogma which is their complement or rather their condition, the resurrection of the dead. That doctrine, as we have already said,† was yet somewhat new in Israel; a multitude of people did not believe it or did not know it.‡ It was the faith of the Pharisees and of the fervent followers of the Messianic beliefs.‖ Jesus accepted it without reserve, but still in the most idealistic sense. Many imagined that in the resurrected world there would be eating, drinking, and giving in marriage. Jesus admits indeed in his kingdom a new feast, a table and wine,§ but he formally excludes marriage. The Sadducees had upon the subject an argument gross in appearance, but at bottom sufficiently accordant with the old theology. It will be remembered that according to the ancient sages, man survived death only in his children. The Mosaic code had consecrated this patriarchal theory by a singular institution, the succession of the Levites. The Sadducees drew from this subtle inferences against the resurrection. Jesus escaped them by formally declaring, that in the life eternal, difference of sex would exist no more, and that man should be like the angels.¶ At times he

* John, XXI, 22-23. Chapter XXI of the fourth Gospel is an addition, as is proved by the final clause of the primitive compilation, which is at verse 31 of chapter XX. But the addition is almost cotemporaneous with the publication of this Gospel. † See above, p. 89-90. ‡ Mark, IX. 9; Luke, XX, 27 seqq.

‖ Dan., XII, 2 seqq.; II Macc., Chap. VII entire; XII, 45-46; XIV, 46; *Acts*, XXIII 6, 8; Jos., *Ant.*, XVIII, I, 3; *B. J.*, II, VIII, 14; III, VIII, 5.

§ Matt., XXVI, 29; Luke, XXII, 30.

¶ Matt., XXII, 24 seqq.; Luke, XX, 34-38; Ebionite Gospel, called "of the Egyptians," in Clem. of Alex., *Strom.*, II, 9, 13; Clem. Rom., Epist., II, 12.

seems to promise resurrection only to the righteous,* the punishment of the wicked consisting in complete death and annihilation.† Oftenest, however, Jesus will have the resurrection applied to the wicked for their eternal confusion.‡

Nothing, we see, in all these theories, was absolutely new. The gospels and the writings of the apostles contain but little of apocalyptic doctrine which is not found already in "Daniel,"‖ "Enoch,"§ and the "Sybilline Oracles"¶ of Jewish origin. Jesus accepted these ideas, generally known among his cotemporaries. He made them the basic point of his action, or to speak more correctly, one of his basic points; for he had too deep an idea of his true work to establish it solely upon principles so frail,—so liable to receive from events a withering refutation.

It is evident, indeed, that such a doctrine, taken by itself in a literal manner, had no future. The world, being obstinately enduring, would destroy it. One generation at most was reserved to it. The faith of the first Christian generation is explained; but the faith of the second generation is explained no longer. After the death of John, or of the last survivor, whoever he may have been, of the group that had seen the Master, the declaration of the latter was proven an illusion.** If the doctrine of Jesus had been only a belief in the speedy destruction of the world, it would certainly to-day be sleeping in oblivion. What then

* Luke, XIV, 14; XX, 35-36. This is also the opinion of St. Paul; I Cor., XV, seqq; I Thess., IV, 12 seqq. See above, p. 90.
† Comp. IV Esdras, IX, 22. ‡ Matt., XXV, 32 seqq.
‖ See especially chapters II, VI-VIII, X-XIII.
§ Ch. I, XLV-LII, LXII, XCIII, 9 seqq.
¶ Book III, 57 seqq.; 652 seqq.; 766 seqq.; 795 seqq.
** These pangs of the Christian conscience are artlessly set forth in the second Epistle attributed to St. Peter, III, 8 seqq.

has saved it? The grand breadth of the evangelical conceptions which has permitted under the same symbol doctrines appropriate to very different intellectual conditions. The world has not come to an end, as Jesus announced, as his disciples believed. But it has been renewed, and in one sense as Jesus desired. It is because it looked in two directions that his thought has been fruitful. His chimera has not had the fate of so many others which have crossed the human mind, because it concealed a germ of life which, introduced, thanks to an envelope of fable, into the womb of humanity, has borne eternal fruits.

Say not that this is a kindly interpretation imagined to free the honor of our great Master from the cruel contradiction given by reality to his dreams. No, no. This true kingdom of God, this kingdom of the Spirit which makes each one a king and priest; this kingdom, which like the grain of mustard seed is become a tree which gives shade to the world, and in the branches of which the birds have their nests, Jesus comprehended, desired and founded. By the side of the false, cold, impossible idea of a pompous advent, he conceived the real city of God, the true "palingenesis," the Sermon upon the Mount, the apotheosis of the weak, the love of the people, the taste for poverty, the renovation of all that is humble, true and simple. This renovation he has sketched like an incomparable artist, by touches which will endure forever. Each of us owes him the best that is in himself. Pardon him his expectation of an empty apocalypse, of a coming in great triumph upon the clouds of heaven. Perhaps this was the error of others rather than his own, and if it is true that he shared in the

illusion of all, what matters it, since his dream rendered him strong against death, and sustained him in a struggle to which without this perhaps he had been unequal?

We must therefore give more than one sense to the divine city conceived by Jesus. If his whole thought had been that the end of time was at hand, and preparation must be made therefor, he would not have surpassed John the Baptist. To renounce a world near its end, to detach self little by little from the present life, to aspire to the reign which was at hand; such would have been the last word of his preaching. The teaching of Jesus had always a much wider scope. He undertook to create a new condition of humanity, and not merely to prepare for the end of that which existed. Elias or Jeremiah reappearing to make men ready for the supreme crises, would not have preached as he did. This is so true, that the morality claimed for the last days, is found to be the eternal morality, that which has saved humanity. Jesus himself, in many cases, adopts methods of speaking which do not enter into the apocalyptic theory. He often declares that the kingdom of God has already commenced, that every man carries it in himself, and may, if he be worthy, enjoy it; that each creates this kingdom quietly by the true conversion of the heart.* The kingdom of God is then only the good,† an order of things better than that which exists, the reign of justice, which the faithful, each according to his ability, should aid to found; or again the liberty of the soul, something analogous to the Buddhist "de-

* Matt., VI, 10, 33; Mark, XII, 34; Luke, XI, 2; XII, 31; XVII, 20, 21 seqq.
† See especially Mark, XII, 34.

liverance," the fruit of freedom. These truths, which to us are purely abstract, were to Jesus living realities. All things in his mind are concrete and substantive. Jesus is the man who has had strongest faith in the reality of the ideal.

In accepting the Utopias of his time and of his race, Jesus thus made them lofty truths, thanks to fruitful misunderstandings. His kingdom of God was doubtless the approaching apocalypse, which was to be unfolded in the heavens. But still it was, and probably above all, the kingdom of the soul created by the liberty and the filial feeling which the virtuous man experiences upon the bosom of his Father. It was pure religion, with no rites, no temple, no priests; it was the moral judgment of the world, awarded to the conscience of the righteous and to the arms of the people. This is what was made to live, this is what has lived. When, at the end of a century of vain expectation, the materialistic hope of a speedy destruction of the world was exhausted, the real kingdom of God was made clear. Convenient explanations cast a veil upon the material kingdom, which will not come. The Revelations of John, the first canonical book of the New Testament,* being too explicitly infected with the idea of an immediate catastrophe, is degraded to a secondary position, considered unintelligible, tortured in a thousand ways, and almost rejected. At least, its fulfilment is adjourned to a indefinite future. A few poor belated ones who still preserved, in the midst of the reactionary epoch, the expectations of the first disciples, became heretics (Ebionites, Millenarians,) lost in the lower depths of

* Justin, *Dial. cum Tryph.*, 81.

Christianity. Humanity had passed to another kingdom of God. The portion of truth contained in the idea of Jesus had triumphed over the chimera which obscured it.

Let us not, however, scorn this chimera, which was the rough rind of the sacred bulb on which we live. This fantastic kingdom of heaven, this endless pursuit of a city of God, which has always preoccupied Christianity in its long career, has been the origin of that grand instinct of the future which has animated all reformers, obstinate disciples of the Apocalypse, from Joachim of Florus to the Protestant sectaries of our day. This powerless effort to found a perfect society has been the source of that extraordinary intensity which has always made the true Christian an athlete in struggling against the present. The idea of the "kingdom of God" and the Apocalypse, which is the complete image of it, are thus, in one sense, the most elevated and poetic expressions of human progress. Certainly there were also great errors to grow out of it. Hanging, a continual menace over humanity, the end of the world, by the periodical terrors which it caused for centuries, retarded to a great extent all profane development. Society being no longer sure of its existence, contracted from this uncertainty a sort of tremor, and those habits of base humility, which render the middle ages so inferior to antiquity and to modern times.* A deep change was, moreover, wrought in the manner of picturing the coming of Christ. The first time that the announcement of the destruction of the planet was made to hu-

* See, for examples, the prologue of Gregory of Tours to his *Histoire ecclesiastique des Francs*, and the numerous acts of the first half of the middle ages, commencing with the formula, "At the approach of the night of the world."

manity, like the infant who welcomes death with a smile, it experienced a paroxysm of joy such as it had never felt before. As it grew older, the world became attached to life. The day of grace, so long awaited by the pure souls of Galilee, became to these iron ages a day of wrath: *Dies iræ, dies illa!* But, in the heart of barbarism even, the idea of the kingdom of God was still fruitful. In spite of the feudal church, of sects, and of religious orders, holy personages continued to protest, in the name of the Gospel, against the iniquity of the world. In our days even, troubled days, in which Jesus has no more authentic followers than those who seem to repudiate him, the dreams of the ideal organization of society, which have so close analogy with the aspirations of the primitive Christian sects, are in one sense only the expansion of the same idea, one of the branches of that immense tree in which germinates every thought of the future, and of which the "kingdom of God" will be the trunk and root forever. All the social revolutions of humanity will be engrafted upon this stock. But infected with a gross materialism, aspiring to the impossible—to found universal happiness upon political and economic measures, the "socialistic" attempts of our time will yet be unfruitful, until they take for their rule the true spirit of Jesus, absolute idealism, this principle that in order to possess the earth it is necessary to renounce it.

The phrase "kingdom of God" expresses, on another hand, with rare felicity, the need which the soul experiences of a supplementary destiny, a compensation for the present life. Those who do not bring themselves to conceive man as composed of two substances, and who believe the deistical dogma of the

immortality of the soul in contradiction with physiology, love to rest upon the hope of a final reparation, which under some unknown form shall satisfy the cravings of the human heart. Who knows whether the final term of progress, in the millions of ages, will not bring back the absolute consciousness of the universe, and in that consciousness the awakening of all who have lived. A sleep of a million of years is no longer than a sleep of an hour. St. Paul, on this hypothesis, would still be right in saying: *In ictu oculi !** It is certain that moral and virtuous humanity will have its reward, that one day the opinion of the noble poor man will judge the world, and that on that day the ideal form of Jesus will be the confusion of the frivolous man who has not believed in virtue, and of the selfish man who has not learned to attain to it. The favorite expression of Jesus remains, therefore, full of eternal beauty. A sort of grand divination seems to have held him in a sublime vagueness, simultaneously embracing many orders of truths.

* I Cor., xv, 52.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE INSTITUTIONS OF JESUS.

What strongly proves, however, that Jesus was never entirely absorbed in his apocalyptic ideas, is that at the very time that he was most preoccupied with them, he is laying with wonderful certainty of view the foundations of a church destined to endure. It is hardly possible to doubt that he himself had chosen among his disciples those who were called by pre-eminence the "apostles" or the "twelve," since on the morning following his death, we find them forming a body, and filling by election the vacancies which had been produced among them.* They were the two sons of Jonas, the two sons of Zebedee, James, son of Cleophas, Philip, Nathaniel bar-Tolmai, Thomas, Levi, son of Alpheus or Matthew, Simon the Canaanite, Thaddeus or Lebbeus, and Judas of Kerioth.† It is probable that the idea of the twelve tribes of Israel had some relation to the choice of this number.‡ The "twelve," at all events, formed a group of privileged

* *Acts*, I, 15 seqq.; I Cor., XV, 5; Gal. I, 10.
† Matt., X, 2 seqq.; Mark, III, 16 seqq.; Luke, VI, 14 seqq.; *Acts*, I, 13; Papias, in Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.*, III, 39.
‡ Matt., XIX, 28; Luke, XXII, 30.

disciples, in which Peter preserved his entirely fraternal pre-eminence,* and to whom Jesus confided the charge of propagating his work. Nothing indicates the sacerdotal college regularly organized; the lists of the "twelve" which have been preserved to us present many uncertainties and contradictions; two or three of those who figure in them are not otherwise heard of. Two at least, Peter and Philip,† were married, and had children.

Jesus evidently imparted secrets to the twelve which he prohibited them from communicating to all.‡ It seems at times that his plan was to envelope his person in some mystery, to postpone the great evidences until after his death, to reveal himself completely only to his disciples, confiding to them the charge of demonstrating him afterwards to the world.‖ "What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light; and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops." This spared him too precise declarations, and created a species of medium between public opinion and himself. There is no doubt that he reserved certain teachings for the apostles, and that he explained to them many parables, the meaning of which he left indefinite to the multitude.§ An enigmatical style and a little oddity in the connection of ideas were in vogue in the teaching of the doctors, as is seen by the sayings of the *Pirke Aboth*. Jesus explained to his intimates what was strange in his apothegms or his apologues, and to them disengaged his teachings from

* *Acts*, I, 15; II, 14; V 2-3; 29; VIII, 19; XV, 7; Gal., I, 18.

† For Peter, see above, p. 156; for Philip, see Papias, Polycrates, and Clemen of Alexandria, cited by Eusebius. *Hist. eccl.*, III, 30, 31, 39; V, 24.

‡ Matt., XVI, 20; XVII, 9; Mark, VIII, 30; IX, 8.

‖ Matt., X, 26, 27; Mark, IV, 21 seqq.; Luke, VIII, 17; XII, 2 seqq.; John, X.V, 22.

§ Matt., XIII, 10 seqq.; 34 seqq.; Mark, IV, 10 seqq.; 33 seqq.; Luke, VIII, 9 seqq.; XII, 41.

the superfluity of comparisons which at times obscured them.* Many of these explanations appear to have been carefully preserved.†

During the lifetime of Jesus, the apostles preached,‡ but without ever separating very much from him. Their preaching, moreover, was limited to the announcement of the coming of the kingdom of God.‖ They went from city to city, receiving hospitality, or rather taking it of themselves according to the custom. The guest in the East has great authority; he is superior to the master of the house; the latter has in him the fullest confidence. This preaching of the fire-side is excellent for the propagation of new doctrines. The hidden treasure is communicated; thus one pays for what he receives; politeness and good relations aiding, the household is touched and converted. Take away oriental hospitality, and the propagation of Christianity would be impossible to explain. Jesus, who held strongly to the good old customs, commanded his disciples to have no scruple about taking advantage of this ancient public right, even then probably abolished in the great towns where there were inns.§ "The laborer," said he, "is worthy of his hire." Once installed in any man's house, they were to remain there, eating and drinking what was offered them, so long as their mission lasted.

Jesus desired that, according to his example, the messengers of the good tidings should render their preaching lovely by polite and kindly manners. H

* Matt., XVI, 6 seqq.; Mark, VIII, 17-23.
† Matt., XIII, 18 seqq.; Mark, VII, 14 seqq.
‡ Luke, IX, 6. ‖ Luke, X, 11.
§ The Greek word πανδοχεῖον has passed into all the Semitic languages of the East to designate an inn.

wished that on entering a house they should give the *selam* or wish of joy. Some hesitated, the *selam* being then as now in the East, a sign of religious communion, which is not risked with persons of doubtful faith. "Fear nothing," said Jesus; "if nobody in the house is worthy of your *selam*, it will turn to you again."* Sometimes, indeed, the apostles of the kingdom of God were badly received, and came to complain to Jesus, who ordinarily sought to calm them. Some, persuaded of the omnipotence of the master, were displeased at this forbearance. The sons of Zebedee wished that he should call fire from heaven upon the inhospitable cities.† Jesus received their importunities with his delicate irony, and stopped them with this: "I am not come to destroy souls, but to save them."

He sought in every way to establish the principle that his apostles were himself.‡ It was believed that he had communicated to them his marvellous virtues. They cast out devils, prophesied, and formed a school of renowned exorcists,‖ although certain cases were beyond their power.§ They performed cures also, sometimes by the imposition of hands, sometimes by anointing with oil,¶ one of the fundamental processes of oriental medicine. In short, like the psylli, they could handle serpents and drink deadly beverages with impunity.** As we depart from Jesus, this theurgy becomes more and more offensive. But there is no doubt that it was a common practice in the primitive

* Matt., x, 11 seqq.; Mark, vi, 10 seqq.; Luke, x, 5 seqq. Comp. II John, 10-11.
† Luke, ix, 52 seqq.
‡ Matt., x, 40-42; xxv, 35 seqq.; Mark, ix, 40; Luke, x, 16; John, xiii, 20.
‖ Matt., vii, 22; x, 1; Mark, iii, 15; vi, 13; Luke, x, 17.
§ Matt., xvii, 18-19. ¶ Mark, vi, 13 xvi, 18; James, v, 14.
** Mark, xvi, 18· Luke, x 19.

church, and that it figured as of highest importance in the attention of cotemporaries.* Charlatans, as ordinarily happens, took advantage of this movement of popular credulity. During the lifetime of Jesus, many who were not his disciples, cast out devils in his name. The true disciples were very much displeased at this, and sought to prevent them. Jesus, who saw in it an acknowledgement of his renown, was not very severe towards them.† We must observe, however, that these powers had to a certain extent become a profession. Carrying to the extreme the logic of the absurd, certain persons cast out devils by Beelzebub,‡ the prince of devils. It was imagined that this sovereign of infernal legions must have full power over his subordinates, and that by working through him, they were sure of expelling the intruding spirit.‖ Some sought even to buy of the disciples of Jesus the secret of the miraculous powers which had been conferred upon them.§

The germ of a church thenceforth began to appear. This fruitful idea of the power of men united (*ecclesia*) seems really an idea of Jesus. Full of his purely idealistic doctrine, that what produces the presence of souls, is communion through love, he declared that whenever a few should assemble in his name, he would be there in the midst of them. He confides to the church the right to bind or to loose (that is to say to render certain things lawful or unlawful), to remit sins, to reprimand, to warn with authority, to pray with the certainty of being heard.¶ It is possible that

* Mark, xvi, 20.
† Mark, ix, 37-38; Luke, ix, 49-50.
‡ Ancient god of the Philistines, transformed by the Jews into a demon.
‖ Matt., xii, 24 seqq.
§ *Acts*, viii, 18 seqq.
¶ Matt., xviii, 17 seqq.; John, xx, 23.

many of these sayings have been attributed to the master, in order to give a basis to the collective authority by which it was afterwards sought to replace his own. At any rate, it was not until after his death that individual churches were constituted by them, and yet this first constitution was made exactly upon the model of the synagogues. Many persons who had loved Jesus very much and founded great hopes upon him, like Joseph of Arimathea, Lazarus, Mary Magdalene and Nicodemus, did not, it seems, enter these churches, and remained content with the tender or respectful remembrance which they had preserved of him.

Moreover, there is no trace, in the teaching of Jesus, of an applied morality or a canonical law, be it ever so ill-defined. Only once, in regard to marriage, he defines his position with clearness and defends divorce.* No more theology, no symbolism. Nothing but a few ideas upon the Father, the Son, and the Spirit,† whence will afterwards be drawn the Trinity and the Incarnation, but which were still in the state of indeterminate images. The last books of the Jewish canon already recognized the Holy Spirit, a species of divine hypostasis, sometimes identified with Wisdom or the Word.‡ Jesus insisted upon this point,‖ and announced to his disciples a baptism by fire and the Holy Ghost,§ far preferable to that of John, a baptism which they believed that they received upon a certain day, after the death of Jesus, under the form of a mighty wind and of tongues of fire.¶

* Matt., xix, 3 seqq.
† Matt., xviii. 19. Comp. Matt., iii, 16-17; John, xv, 26.
‡ *Sap.*, i, 7; vii, 7; ix, 17; xii, 1; *Eccl.*, i, 9; xv, 5; xxiv, 27; xxxix; 8; *Judith* xvi. 17.
‖ Matt., x, 20; Luke, xii, 42; xxiv, 49; John, xiv, 26; xv, 26.
§ Matt., iii, 11; Mark, *i*, 8; Luke, iii. 16; John, i, 26; iii, 5; *Acts*, i, 5, 8; x 47.
¶ *Acts*, ii, 1-4; xi, 15; xix, 6. Cf. John, vii, 39.

The Holy Spirit thus sent by the Father will teach them every truth, and bear witness to those which Jesus himself has promulgated.* Jesus, to designate this Spirit, made use of the word *Peraklit* which the Syro-Chaldaic had borrowed from the Greek (παράκλητος), and which appears to have had in his mind the meaning of advocate,† comforter,‡ and sometimes that of interpreter of celestial truths, of a teacher charged with revealing to men mysteries yet concealed.‖ He himself is regarded by his disciples as a *peraklit*,§ and the Spirit which was to come after his death was purely to replace him. This was an application of the process which Jewish theology and Christian theology were to pursue for centuries, and which was to produce a whole series of divine intercessors, the *Metathrone*, the *Synadelphos* or *Sandalphon*, and all the personifications of the Cabbala. In Judaism, however, these creations were to rest upon individual and free speculations, while in Christianity, from the fourth century, they were to form the essence of the universal orthodoxy and dogma.

It is useless to remark how entirely foreign was the idea of a religious book, containing a code and articles of faith, to the thought of Jesus He not only did not write, but it was contrary to the spirit of the rising sect to produce sacred books. They believed themselves upon the eve of the grand final catastrophe. The Messiah came to put the seal upon the Law and the prophets, not to promulgate new texts. Thus,

* John, xv, 26; xvi, 13.

† To *peraklit* they oppose *Katigor* (κατήγορος) "the accuser."

‡ John, xiv, 16; I John, ii, 1.

‖ John, xiv, 26; xv, 26; xvi, 7 seqq. Comp. Philo, *De Mundi opificio*, 6.

§ John, xiv, 16. Comp. the epistle previously cited, *l. c.*

with the exception of the Apocalypse, which may be called the only revealed book of infant Christianity, all the other writings of the apostolic age are incidental productions, having no pretension whatever to furnish a complete system of doctrine. The Gospels had at first an altogether private character, and an authority far inferior to that of tradition.*

Nevertheless, had not the sect some sacrament, some rite, some rallying sign? It had one, which all traditions carry back to Jesus. One of the favorite ideas of the master is that he was the new bread, a bread superior to manna and upon which humanity was to live. This idea, the germ of the Eucharist, sometimes assumed singularly concrete forms in his teachings. Once especially he allowed himself, in the synagogue of Capernaum, to take a bold step, which cost him many of his disciples. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, not Moses but my Father has given you the bread of heaven."† And he added: "I am the bread of life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."‡ This speech excited loud murmurs. "What means he, said they, by these words: I am the bread of life? Is not this Jesus the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I come down from heaven?" But Jesus continued still more forcibly: "I am the bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness and are dead; this is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die. I am the living bread; if any

* Papias, in Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.*, III, 39.
† John, VI, 32 seqq.
‡ We find an analogous expression, producing a like misunderstanding, in John, IV, 10 seqq.

man eat of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread which I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."* The scandal was now at its hight: "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" Jesus rising still higher replies: "Verily, verily I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. This is that bread which came down from heaven: not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead: he that eateth of this bread shall live forever." Such persistency in paradox shocked many disciples who ceased to follow him. Jesus did not retract; he merely added: "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you are spirit and life." The twelve remained faithful, despite this strange preaching. It was to Cephas in particular an occasion for showing absolute devotion and proclaiming again: "Thou art the Christ, the son of God."

It is probable that thenceforward, in the ordinary meals of the sect, some usage was established in consonance with the discourse so ill-received by the people of Capernaum. But the apostolic traditions on this subject are very inconsistent and probably designedly incomplete. The synoptic gospels indicate

* All these discourses bear too strongly the mark of John's peculiar style, for us to suppose them exact. The anecdote related in the sixth chapter of the fourth Gospel cannot, nevertheless, be devoid of historical reality.

an exclusively sacramental act serving as the basis of a mysterious rite, and they place its occurrence at the last Supper. John, who has particularly preserved to us the incident of the synagogue of Capernaum, speaks of no such act, although he recounts the last Supper very much at length. Moreover, we see Jesus recognized at the breaking of bread,* as if this act were to those who followed him, that most characteristic of his person. When he was dead, he appeared to the pious recollections of his disciples as presiding over a mystic banquet, holding the bread, blessing it, and breaking it and presenting it to the guests.† It is probable that this was one of his habits, and that at such moments he was peculiarly tender and lovely. A material circumstance, the presence of fish upon the table (a striking indication which proves that the rite took its origin upon the shore of Lake Tiberias‡), was itself almost sacramental, and became a necessary part of the images which were formed of the sacred festival.‖

Meals had become in the infant community the most charming occasions. At such times they met one another; the master spoke to each, and entered into a conversation full of cheer and charm. Jesus loved these hours and took pleasure in seeing his spiritual family thus grouped around him.§ Participation in the same bread was considered a sort of commun-

* Luke, xxiv, 30, 35.

† Luke, *l. c.* John, xxi, 13.

‡ Comp. Matt., vii, 10; xiv, 17 seqq.; xv, 34 seqq.; Mark, vi, 38 seqq., Luke, ix, 13 seqq; xi, 11; xxiv, 42; John, vi, 9 seqq; xxi, 9 seqq. The basin of Lake Tiberias is the only place in Palestine where fish form any considerable part of the food of the inhabitants.

‖ John, xxi, 15; Luke, xxiv, 42-43. Compare the oldest representations of the Supper copied or restored by M. de Rossi in his dissertation upon the ΙΧΘΥΣ (*Spicilegium Solesmense* de dom Pitra, t. III, p. 568 seqq.) The meaning of the anagram which constitutes the word ΙΧΘΥΣ was probably combined with a more ancient tradition in regard to the part acted by fish in the evangelical repasts.

§ Luke, xxii, 15.

ion, a reciprocal bond. The master used extremely energetic terms in this respect, which were at a later day understood with unbridled literalness. Jesus is at once very idealistic in his conceptions, and very materialistic in his expressions. Wishing to convey this thought that the believer lives only through him that altogether (body, blood and soul) he was the life of the true believer, he said to his disciples: "I am your sustenance," a phrase which, turned into the figurative style, became: "My flesh is your bread, my blood is your drink." Then his habitual modes of speech, always strongly material, carried him still farther. At table, pointing to the provisions, he said: "Behold me;" holding the bread: "This is my body," holding the wine: "This is my blood;" all methods of speech which were equivalent to: "I am your sustenance."

This mysterious rite obtained great importance during the lifetime of Jesus. It was probably established some time before the last journey to Jerusalem, and was the result of general teaching, rather than of any determinate act. After the death of Jesus it became the grand symbol of the Christian communion,* and it was to the most solemn moment of the life of the Savior that its establishment was referred. They wished to see in the consecration of the bread and wine a farewell memorial which Jesus, at the moment of departing this life, had left to his disciples.† Jesus himself was found again in this sacrament. The altogether spiritual idea of the presence of souls, one of those most familiar to the Master, which caused him to say, for example, that he was in person in the midst

* *Acts*, II, 42, 46. † *I Cor.*, XI, 20 seqq

of his disciples* when they were assembled in his name, rendered this easily admissible. Jesus, as we have already observed,† never had any well defined idea of what constitutes individuality. At the height of exaltation to which he had arrived, the idea dominated all else to such a degree, that the body went for nothing. People are one when they love each other, when they live one for another; had not he and his disciples been one?‡ His disciples adopted the same language. Those who, for years, had lived by him, saw him always holding the bread, then the cup, "in his sacred and venerable hands,"‖ and offering himself to them. It was he whom they ate and whom they drank; he became the true Passover, the ancient one having been abrogated by his blood. It is impossible to translate into our essentially determinate idiom, in which the rigorous distinction of the literal from the metaphorical sense must always be preserved, manners of style, the essential characteristic of which is to give to metaphor, or rather to the idea, complete reality.

* Matt., xviii, 20. † See above, p. 221. ‡ John, xii, entire.
‖ Canons of the Greek Masses and of the Latin Mass (very old).

CHAPTER XIX.

INCREASING PROGRESSION OF ENTHUSIASM AND EXALTATION.

It is clear that such a religious society, founded solely upon the expectation of the kingdom of God, must be in itself very incomplete. The first Christian generation lived entirely upon expectations and dreams. On the eve of seeing the world come to an end, they thought useless all things which serve only to continue the world. Property was forbidden.* Everything which attaches man to earth, everything which turns him aside from heaven was to be shunned. Although many disciples were married, there was no marrying, it seems, after entrance into the sect.† Celibacy was decidedly preferred; even in marriage, continence was commended.‡ At one time, the master seems to approve those who should mutilate themselves for the sake of the kingdom of God.‖ He was in this consistent with his principle: "If thy hand or thy foot offend thee, cut them off, and cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire. And if thine eye offend

* Luke, XIV, 33; *Acts*, IV, 32 seqq.; V. 1-11.
† Matt., XIX, 10 seqq.; Luke, XVIII, 29 seqq.
‡ This is the constant doctrine of Paul. Comp. *Rev.*, XIV, 4.
‖ Matt., XIX, 12.

thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, rather than having two eyes to be cast into hell-fire."* The cessation of generation was often considered the sign and the condition of the kingdom of God.†

Never, we see, had this primitive church formed a durable society, without the great variety of germs implanted by Jesus in his teaching. It will require more than a century for the true Christian church, that which has converted the world, to disengage itself from this little sect of "latter day saints" and to become a frame applicable to all human society. The same thing, moreover, took place in Buddhism, which was at first founded only for monks. The same thing would have happened in the order of St. Francis, if that order had succeeded in its claim to become the rule of all human society. Born as utopias, succeeding through their very exaggeration, the great foundations of which we speak shall fill the world only upon condition of being profoundly modified, and of laying aside their excesses. Jesus did not survive this first period altogether monastic, in which men believe that they can with impunity attempt the impossible. He made no concession to necessity. He preached boldly war against nature, total rupture with kin. "Verily I say unto you, said he, whosoever shall leave house, or parents, or brethren, or wife, or children, for the kingdom of God's sake, shall receive an hundred fold more in this world, and in the world to come life everlasting."‡

* Matt., XVIII, 8-9. Cf. Tal. of Bab., *Niddah*, 13 *b*.
† Matt., XXII, 30; Mark, XII, 25; Luke, XX, 35; Ebionite Gospel, called "of the Egyptians" in Clem. of Alex., *Strom.*, III, 9, 13 and Clem. Rom., Epist. II 12.
‡ Luke, XVIII, 29-30.

The instructions which Jesus is said to have given to his disciples breathe the same exaltation.* He, so yielding to those who were without, he who is content at times with partial conversions,† shows towards his own disciples extreme rigor. He would have no compromise. It might be called an "Order" constituted by the most austere rules. Faithful to his idea that the cares of life trouble and debase man, Jesus demands of his associates an entire detachment from the world, an absolute devotion to his work. They were to carry with them neither money, nor provisions for the journey, not even a scrip, nor a change of raiment. They were to practice absolute poverty, to live upon alms and hospitality. "Freely, ye have received, freely give,"‡ said he in his beautiful language. Arrested, dragged before the judges, let them prepare no defense; the celestial advocate, the *Peraklit*, will inspire what they should say. The Father will send them from on high his Spirit, which shall become the prime mover of all their actions, the director of their thoughts, their guide through the world.‖ Driven out of a city, let them shake off upon it the dust from their feet, warning the inhabitants at the same time, in order that they may not plead ignorance, of the proximity of the kingdom of God. "Before you shall have gone over the cities of Israel, added he, the Son of man shall appear."

A strange ardor animates all these discourses, which may be in part the creation of the enthusiasm of the

* Matt., x, entire; xxiv, 9; Mark, vi, 8 seqq.; ix, 40; xiii, 9-13; Luke, ix, 3 eqq.; x, 1 seqq.; xii, 4 seqq.; xxi, 17; John, xv, 18 seqq., xvii, 14.
† Mark, ix, 38 seqq.
‡ Matt., x, 8. Comp Midrash Ialkout, *Deuteron.*, sect. 824.
‖ Matt., x, 20· John, xiv, 16 seqq., 26; xv, 26; xvi, 7, 13.

disciples,* but which even in this case comes indirectly from Jesus, since the enthusiasm itself was his work. Jesus announces to those who choose to follow him great persecutions and the hatred of all men. He sends them as lambs into the midst of wolves. They will be beaten in the synagogues and dragged to prison. The brother shall be delivered up by his brother and the son by his father. When they are persecuted in one country let them flee to another. "The disciple, said he, is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul. Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall to the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows."† "Whosoever, said he again, shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father; but whosoever shall be ashamed of me before men, him will I deny before the angels, when I come in the glory of my Father, which is in heaven."‡

In these crises of rigor he went to the extent of suppressing the flesh. His demands lost all bounds. Despising the wholesome limits of human nature, he asks that men should exist only for him, that they should love him alone. "If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."‖ "Whosoever forsaketh not

* The idea expressed in Matt., x, 38; xvi, 24; Mark, viii, 34; Luke, xiv, 27, could have been conceived only after the death of Jesus.
† Matt., x, 24-31; Luke, xii, 4-7.
‡ Matt., x, 32-33; Mark, viii, 38; Luke. ix, 26; xii, 8-9.
‖ Luke, xiv, 26. Luke's exaggerated style must be taken into account here.

all that he hath, he cannot be my disciple."* Some thing more than human, something strange was then mingled with his words; it was like a fire devouring life at its root, and reducing everything to a frightful desert. The sad and bitter sentiment of disgust for the world, of utter abnegation, which characterize Christian perfection, had for its founder, not the deli cate and joyous moralist of the earlier days, but the sombre giant whom a sublime presentiment, as it were, was casting farther and farther forth from humanity. One would say that, in these moments of hostility to the most natural necessities of the heart, he had forgotten the pleasures of living, of loving, of seeing, and of feeling. Overpassing all bounds, he dared to say: "If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself and follow me! He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall gain it. For what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"† Two anecdotes, of the style which need not be accepted as historic, but which attempt to give a trait of character by exaggerating it, paint clearly this defiance thrown down to nature. He says to a man: "Follow me!" "Lord," replies the man, "suffer me first to go and bury my father." Jesus responds: "Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God." Another says to him: "Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go and put in order the

* Luke, xiv, 33.
† Matt., x, 37-39; xvi, 24-25; Luke, ix, 23-25; xiv, 26 27; xvii, 33; John, xii, 25.

affairs of my house." Jesus replies: "No man having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."* An extraordinary confidence, and at times accents of wonderful sweetness, overturning all our ideas, make these exaggerations acceptable. "Come unto me, cried he, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you; learn of me that I am weak and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls: for my yoke is easy and my burden is light."†

Great danger resulted to the future from this exalted morality, expressed in a language of hyperbole and with a terrible energy. By virtue of detaching man from earth, life was shattered. The Christian will be praised for being a bad son and a bad patriot, if it is for Christ that he resists his father and combats his country. The antique city, the republic, mother of all, the State, the common law of all, are arrayed in hostility to the kingdom of God. A fatal germ of theocracy is introduced into the world.

Another consequence is dimly seen henceforth Transported into a calm condition and into the midst of a society confident of its own duration, this morality, made for a critical moment, would seem impossible. The Gospel was thus destined to become to Christians a utopia, which very few would trouble themselves to realize. These awful maxims were, for the mass, to sleep in a deep oblivion, aided by the clergy themselves; the gospel man will be a dangerous man. Of all human beings, the most selfish, the most arrogant, the most severe, the most attached to earth, a Louis XIV, for example, was to find priests to persuade

* Matt. VIII, 21-22; Luke, IX, 59-62. † Matt., XI, 28-30.

him, in spite of the Gospel, that he was a Christian. But always also Saints should be found who should apprehend literally the sublime paradoxes of Jesus. Perfection being placed beyond the ordinary conditions of society, the complete evangelical life being possible only outside of the world, the foundation of asceticism and of the monastic state was laid. Christian societies have two codes of morality, one half-heroic for the common man, the other exalted to excess for the perfect man; and the perfect man will be the monk subjected to rules which claim to realize the Gospel ideal. It is certain that this ideal, were it only for the obligation of celibacy and poverty, could not be a common law. The monk is thus, in one sense, the only true Christian. Common sense revolts at such excesses; according to it, the impossible is the sign of weakness and of error. But common sense is a bad judge when great things are to be dealt with. To obtain anything of humanity, we must ask more. The immense moral progress due to the Gospel comes of these exaggerations. It is by reason of this that it has been, like stoicism, but with infinitely broader scope, a living argument of the divine forces which are in man, a monument erected to the power of the will.

We can easily imagine that for Jesus, at the period to which we have now arrived, everything other than the kingdom of God had absolutely disappeared. He was, if we may so speak, totally beyond nature; family, friendship, country, had no longer any meaning to him. Doubtless, he had thenceforth offered his life a sacrifice. At times, we are tempted to believe that, seeing in his own death the means of founding his kingdom, he conceived the deliberate

purpose of causing himself to be killed.* At other times (although this idea was not established as a dogma until somewhat later), death presents itself to him as a sacrifice, which will appease his Father and save men.† A singular relish for persecution and torment‡ seized him. His blood appeared to him like the water of a second baptism, in which he must be bathed, and he seemed possessed by a singular haste to go forward to this baptism which alone could quench his thirst.‖

The grandeur of his views of the future was at times surprising. He did not conceal from himself the terrible storm which he was exciting in the world. "Suppose ye," said he, with boldness and beauty, that "I am come to bring peace on earth; I tell you, Nay; I am come to send the sword. In a house of five three shall be against two and two against three. I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in law. Henceforth a man's foes shall be they of his own household."§ "I am come to send fire on the earth; the better if it be already kindled?"¶ "They shall put you out of the synagogues," said he also; "yea, the time cometh that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service."** "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you."††

Carried away by this terrible tide of enthusiasm,

* Matt., xvi, 21-23; xvii, 12, 21-22. † Mark, x, 45.
‡ Luke, vi 22 seqq. ‖ Luke, xii, 50.
§ Matt., x, 34-36; Luke, xii, 51-53. Compare Micah, vii, 5-6.
¶ Luke, xii, 49. See the Greek text. ** John, xvi, 2. †† John, xv, 18-20

commanded by the necessities of a preaching more and more exalted, Jesus was no longer free; he belonged to his mission and in one sense to humanity. At times one would have said that his reason was disturbed. He had sufferings and agitations within.* The grand vision of the kingdom of God, flashing ceaselessly before his eyes, dizzied him. His disciples at certain moments believed him mad.† His enemies declared him possessed.‡ His temperament, which was excessively ardent, bore him every instant beyond the limits of human nature. His work not being a work of reason, and mocking all the classifications of the human mind, what he demanded most imperiously, was "faith."‖ This word was that which was oftenest repeated in the little cœnaculum. It is the word of all popular movements. It is clear that none of these movements would take place, if it were necessary that he who sets them on foot should gain over his disciples successively by good proofs logically deduced. Reflection leads only to doubt, and if the authors of the French Revolution, for example, had felt bound to be previously convinced by meditation for a sufficient length of time, all would have arrived at old age without doing anything. Jesus, in like manner, aimed less at logical conviction than at enthusiasm. Pressing, imperative, he endured no opposition; you must be converted; he is waiting. His natural gentleness seemed to have abandoned him; he was sometimes rude and uncouth.§ His disciples at times ceased to comprehend him, and experienced before

* John xii, 27. † Mark, iii, 21 seqq.
‡ Mark, iii, 22; John, vii, 20; viii, 48 seqq.; x, 20 seqq.
‖ Matt., viii, 10; ix, 2, 22, 28-29; xvii, 19; John, vi, 29 etc.
§ Matt., xvii, 16; Mark, iii, 5; ix, 18; Luke, viii, 45; ix, 41.

him a feeling of fear.* Sometimes his intolerance of all opposition, led him to acts inexplicable and apparently absurd.†

Not that his virtue gave way; but his struggle against the material in the name of the ideal became insupportable. He was wounded by and shrank from contact with the earth. Obstacles irritated him. His notion of the Son of God troubled him and grew exaggerated. The fatal law which condemns the idea to sink as soon as it seeks to convert men, began to apply to him. Contact with men reduced him towards their level. The tone which he had assumed could not be sustained longer than a few months; it was time that death should come to release him from a condition strained to excess, to deliver him from the impossibilities of a way without exit, and, while rescuing him from an ordeal too much prolonged, to introduce him straightway sinless into his heavenly serenity.

* It is especially in Mark that this trait is perceptible; IV, 40; V, 15; IX, 31, X, 32.
† Mark, XI. 12-14, 20 seqq.

CHAPTER XX.

OPPOSITION TO JESUS.

During the first period of his career, it does not seem that Jesus had met with any serious opposition. His preaching, owing to the extreme liberty which was enjoyed in Galilee and to the number of teachers who arose on all sides, had no renown beyond a rather limited circle of persons. But after Jesus had entered upon a brilliant career of prodigies and public successes, the mutterings of the storm began to be heard. More than once he was forced to hide or to flee.* Antipater, however, never interfered with him, although Jesus expressed himself sometimes very severely in his regard.† At Tiberias, his usual residence, the Tetrarch was only four or five miles from the region chosen for the centre of his activity; he heard of his miracles, which he doubtless supposed were cunning tricks, and he desired to see some of them.† The faithless were at that time very curious in such wonders.‡ With his ordinary tact, Jesus refused. He took good care not to wander forth into an irreligious world, which desired of him nothing but a vain amusement; he aspired only to gain the people; he reserved for the simple means good for them alone.

* Matt., XII, 14-16; Mark, III, 7; IX, 29-30.
† Mark, VIII, 15; Luke, XIII, 32.
‡ Luke, IX, 9; XXIII, 8.
‖ *Lucius*, attributed to Lucian, 4

For a moment, the rumor spread that Jesus was none other than John the Baptist resuscitated from the dead. Antipater was anxious and troubled ;* he employed a ruse to rid his dominions of the new prophet. Some Pharisees, apparently from friendship towards Jesus, came and told him that Antipater designed to put him to death. Jesus notwithstanding his great simplicity, detected the snare and did not depart.† His altogether peaceful ways, his repugnance to popular agitation finally reassured the Tetrarch and dissipated the danger.

The new doctrine was far from meeting with an equally favorable reception in all the towns of Galilee. Not only did unbelieving Nazareth continue to reject him who was to be her glory ; not only did his brothers persist in not believing on him ;‡ but the cities of the lake even, generally favorable, were not all converted. Jesus frequently bemoans the incredulity and hardness of heart which he encounters, and, although it is natural to manifest in such reproaches something of the exaggeration of the preacher, although we feel in them that species of *convicium seculi* in which Jesus delighted in imitation of John the Baptist,‖ it is clear that the country was far from flocking altogether to the kingdom of God. "Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! he exclaimed, for if the mighty works which were done in you had been done n Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago n sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum,

* Matt., xiv, 1 seqq.; Mark, vi, 14 seqq.; Luke, ix, 7 seqq.
† Luke, xiii, 31 seqq.
‡ John, vii, 5.
‖ Matt., xii, 39, 45· xiii, 15; xvi, 4; Luke, xi, 29

which art exalted unto heaven, shall be brought down unto hell: for if the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom, in the day of judgment, than for thee."* "The queen of Sheba, added he, shall rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation, and condemn them: for she came from the utmost parts of the earth, to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, a greater than Solomon is here. The men of Nineveh shall rise up in the judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: for they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and behold, a greater than Jonas is here."† His wandering and precarious life, at first full of charm to him, began also to weigh upon him. "The foxes" said he "have holes and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head."‡ Bitterness and reproach become more and more manifest in his heart. He accused the unbelieving of refusing to yield to the evidence, and said that, even at the moment when the Son of man should appear in his celestial glory, there would still be those who would doubt him.‖

Jesus indeed could not accept opposition with the coolness of the philosopher, who, understanding the reason of the diverse opinions which divide the world, takes it as a matter of course that others should not be of his way of thinking. One of the principal faults of the Jewish race is its bitterness in controversy, and the abusive tone which it almost always assumes in it.

* Matt., xi. 21-24; Luke, ix, 12-15.
† Matt., xii, 41-42; Luke, xi, 31 32.
‡ Matt., viii, 20; Luke, ix, 58.
‖ Luke, xviii, 8.

There were never in the world such passionate quarrels as those which the Jews had among themselves. It is the sentiment of delicate discrimination which renders man polished and moderate. Now the lack of delicate discriminations is one of the most constant traits of the Semitic mind. Fine productions, the dialogues of Plato, for example, are entirely foreign to the genius of these nations. Jesus, who was exempt from nearly all the defects of his race, and whose dominant quality was precisely an infinite delicacy, was led in spite of himself, to make use in polemics of the prevalent style.* Like John the Baptist,† he employed against his adversaries very harsh terms. Of an exquisite gentleness with the simple, he became severe in the presence of incredulity, even that which was least aggressive.‡ He was no longer the mild teacher of the "Sermon on the Mount," who had as yet met neither resistance nor difficulty. Passion, which lay at the bottom of his character, now drew him into the most ardent invective. This singular admixture ought not to surprise us. A man of our own time has presented the same contrast with extraordinary distinctness, M. de Lamennais. In his beautiful book, "*Paroles d'un croyant*," the most unbridled anger and the gentlest reflections alternate as in a mirage. This man, who had great kindness in the conversation of life, became harsh even to madness towards those who failed to think as he did. Jesus, in the same manner, applied to himself not unjustly the passage of the book of Isaiah :‖ "He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street.

* Matt. xii, 34; xv, 14; xxiii, 33.
† Matt., iii, 7.
‡ Matt., xii, 30; Luke, xxi, 2-3.
‖ xlii, 2 3.

A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench."* Nevertheless many of the commands which he gives to his disciples contain the germs of true fanaticism,† germs which the middle ages were to develope in a cruel way. Should he be blamed for this? No revolution is ever accomplished without some rudeness. If Luther, if the actors of the French Revolution had been compelled to observe the rules of politeness, the Reformation and the Revolution would not have been. Let us congratulate ourselves also that Jesus met with no law to punish outrage on any class of citizens. The Pharisees would have been inviolable. All the great things of humanity have been accomplished in the name of absolute principles. A critical philosopher would have said to his disciples: Respect the opinion of others, and believe that no one is so completely in the right that his adversary is completely in the wrong. But the action of Jesus has nothing in common with the disinterested speculation of the philosopher. To confess that one has for a moment attained the ideal, and has been checked by the malignity of others, is a thought insupportable to an ardent soul. What must it have been to the founder of a new world?

The invincible obstacle to the ideas of Jesus came above all from orthodox Judaism, represented by the Pharisees. Jesus was departing more and more from he ancient Law. Now, the Pharisees were the genuine Jews, the nerve and strength of Judaism. Although this party had its centre at Jerusalem, it had nevertheless its adepts either living in Galilee, or com-

* Matt., xii, 19-20. † Matt., x, 14-15, 21 seqq.; 34 seqq.; Luke, xix, 27.

ing thither frequently.* They were in general people of narrow mind, much given to outward appearances, of a scornful devotion, formal, self satisfied, and self-confident.† Their manners were ridiculous, and caused a smile even in those who respected them. The nicknames which the people bestowed upon them, and which partake of caricature, evidence this. There was the "bandy-legged Pharisee" (*Nikfi*), who walked in the streets dragging his feet and hitting them against the stones; "the raw-headed Pharisee," (*Kizai*), who went with his eyes closed in order not to see the women, and knocked his forehead against the walls so that it was always bloody: "the drumstick Pharisee" (*Medoukia*) who stood folded up like the leg of a fowl; the "heavy-shouldered Pharisee," (*Schikmi*) who walked with his back bent as if he bore upon his shoulders the entire weight of the Law; the "*What is there to be done? I will do it* Pharisee," always on the scent for a precept to be obeyed, and finally the "painted Pharisee," to whom all the externals of devotion were only a varnish of hypocrisy.‡ This rigorousness was, indeed, frequently only apparent, and concealed in reality great moral laxity.‖ The people nevertheless were its dupes. The people, whose instincts are always right, even when they blunder most fearfully upon the question of persons, are very easily

* Mark, VII, 1; Luke, V, 17 seqq.; VII, 36.

† Matt., VI, 2, 5, 16; IX; 11, 14; XII. 2; XXIII, 5, 15, 23; Luke, V, 30; VI, 2, 7; XI, 39 seqq; XVIII, 12; John, IX, 16; *Pirke Aboth*, I, 16; Jos., *Ant.*, XVII, II, 4 XVIII. I, 3; *Vita*, 38; Talm. of Bab., *Sota* 22 *b*.

‡ Talm. of Jerus., *Berakoth*, IX, sub fin.; *Sota*, V, 7; Talm. of Bab., *Sota*, 22 *b*. The two versions of this curious passage present sensible differences. We have in general followed the Talmud of Babylon, which seems more natural. Cf. Epiph., *Adv hær.*, XVI, 1. The statements of Epiphanius and many of those of the Talmud may, however, relate to an epoch posterior to Jesus, an epoch in which "Pharisee" had become the spnonyme of "devotee."

‖ Matt., V, 20; XV 4; XXIII, 3, 16 seqq.; John, VIII, 7; Jos., *Ant.*, XII, IX, 1 XIII, X, 5.

deceived by pretended devotees. What the people love in them is good and worthy of being loved; but they have not sufficient penetration to discriminate between the appearance and the reality.

The antipathy which, in so passionate a world, must from the first have burst forth between Jesus and persons of this character, is easy to comprehend. Jesus desired nothing but the religion of the heart; that of the Pharisees consisted almost exclusively in observances. Jesus sought out the humble and the down-trodden of every sort; the Pharisees saw in that an insult to their religion of respectability. A Pharisee was an infallible and impeccable man, a pedant, sure that he was right, taking the first place in the synagogue, praying in the streets, giving alms at the sound of the trumpet, and looking about to see if he were saluted. Jesus maintained that all men should await the judgment of God with fear and humility. But the false religious direction represented by the Pharisees was far from reigning without control. Many men before Jesus, or of his time, such as Jesus the son of Sirach, one of the real ancestors of Jesus of Nazareth, Gamaliel, Antigonus of Soco, and especially the mild and noble Hillel, had taught religious doctrines far more elevated, and already almost evangelical. But these good seeds had been stifled, the beautiful maxims of Hillel, condensing all the Law into equity,* those of Jesus the son of Sirach, making worship consist in the practice of good,† were forgotten or anathematized.‡ Schammai, with his narrow and exclusive spirit, had gained the victory; an enormous

* Talm. of Bab., *Schabbath*, 21 *a*; *Joma*, 35 *b* † *Eccl.* xvii, 21 seqq.; xxxv, 1 seqq
‡ Talm of Jerus., *Sanhedrin*, xi, 1; Talm. of Bab, *Sanhedrin*, 100 *b*.

mass of 'traditions" had stifled the Law,* under pretext of caring for it and interpreting it. Undoubtedly these conservative measures had had their portion of utility; it was well that the Jewish people should love their Law to madness, since it was this fanatical love which, by saving the religion of Moses, under Antiochus Epiphanes and under Herod, preserved the leaven whence Christianity was to arise. But taken in themselves, all these old precautions were merely puerile. The synagogue which was their depository, was now nothing more than a mother of errors. Its reign was ended, and yet to ask it to abdicate, was to ask the impossible, what no established power has ever done or can do.

The struggles of Jesus with official hypocrisy were continuous. The ordinary tactics of reformers who arise in the religious state which we have just described, and which may be called "religious formalism," is to oppose the "text" of the sacred books to the "traditions." Religious zeal is always innovating, even when it claims to be conservative in the highest degree. Just as the Neo-Catholics of our day are continually departing from the Gospel, so the Pharisees departed at every step from the Bible. This is why the Puritan reformer usually is particularly "biblical," starting from the immutable text to criticise the current theology which has been progressing from generation to generation. Thus did the Karaites, and the Protestants at a later day. Jesus laid the axe at the root of the tree far more energetically. We see him sometimes, it is true, invoke the text against the pretended *Masores* or traditions of the Pharisees.†

* Matt., xv, 2. † Matt., xv, 2 seqq.; Mark, vii, 2 seqq.

But, in general, he makes little of exegesis; it is the conscience to which he appeals. At the same blow he hews down text and commentaries. He shows clearly to the Pharisees, that with their traditions they are seriously innovating upon the religion of Moses; but he by no means claims himself to return to Moses. His aim was forward, not backward. Jesus was more than the reformer of a superannuated religion; he was the creator of the eternal religion of humanity.

Disputes arose, especially in regard to a multitude of external rites introduced by tradition, and which neither Jesus nor his disciples observed.* The Pharisees reproached them for it severely. When he dined with them, he scandalized them greatly by not conforming to the prescribed ablutions. "Give ye alms, said he, and all things shall become clean unto you."† What offended in the highest degree his delicate sensitiveness was the air of assurance which the Pharisees carried into religious affairs, their contemptible devotion, which resulted in an empty search for prerogatives and titles, and in no wise in the amelioration of the heart. An admirable parable interpreted this idea with infinite charm and exactness. "One day, said he, two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood up and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote up-

* Matt., xv, 2 seqq.; Mark, vii, 4, 8; Luke, v, sub fin.; and vi, init.; xi, 38 seqq
† Luke, xi, 41.

on his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other."*

A hatred which could be appeased only by death was the consequence of these struggles. John the Baptist had already provoked hostilities of the same kind.† But the aristocrats of Jerusalem, who disdained him, had allowed the simple people to consider him a prophet.‡ Now, the war was to the death. It was a new spirit which appeared in the world and which struck with decay all that had preceded it. John the Baptist was thoroughly a Jew; Jesus was hardly so at all. Jesus addresses himself always to the delicacy of the moral sentiment. He is a disputer only when he argues against the Pharisees, the adversary forcing him, as happens almost always, to take his own tone.‖ His exquisite irony, his arch provocations, always struck to the heart. Eternal darts, they remained fixed in the wound. The Nessus shirt of ridicule, which the Jew, son of the Pharisees, has dragged after him in tatters for these eighteen centuries, was woven by Jesus with divine art. Masterpieces of lofty raillery, his traits are written in lines of fire upon the flesh of the hypocrite and the pretended devotee. Incomparable traits, traits worthy of a Son of God! Thus, a God alone can kill. Socrates and Moliere but graze the skin. He carries fire and madness into the marrow of the bones.

But it was just also that this great master of irony should pay for his triumph with his life. Even in Galilee, the Pharisees employed against him the

* Luke, xviii, 9-14; Comp. ibid., xiv, 7-11.
† Matt., iii, 7 seqq.; xvii, 12-13. ‡ Matt., xiv, 5; xxi, 26; Mark, xi, 32; Luke, xxi, 6.
‖ Matt., xii, 3-8; xxiii, 16 seqq.

device, which was afterwards to be successful at Jerusalem. They undertook to interest in their quarrel the partizans of the new political order which had been established.* The facilities for escape which Jesus found in Galilee, and the feebleness of the government of Antipater defeated these endeavors. He went of himself to meet the danger. He saw well that his action, if it were confined to Galilee, was necessarily limited. Judea drew him as by a charm; he would make a last attempt to gain over the rebellious city and seemed to assume the task of justifying the proverb that a prophet might not perish out of Jerusalem.†

* Mark, III, 6. † Luke, XIII, 33.

CHAPTER XXI.

LAST JOURNEY OF JESUS TO JERUSALEM.

Longtime had Jesus divined the dangers which surrounded him.* For a period which we may estimate at eighteen months, he avoided the pilgrimage to Jerusalem.† At the feast of Tabernacles of the year 32 (according to the hypothesis which we have adopted), his relatives, still indisposed and incredulous.‡ induced him to go thither. The evangelist John seems to intimate that there was in this invitation some concealed project to destroy him. "Show thyself to the world," said they; "these things are not done in secret. Go into Judea, that men may see the works that thou doest." Jesus, suspecting some treachery, at first refused; afterwards, when the caravan of pilgrims was gone, he began the journey unknown to all, and almost alone.‖ This was his last farewell to Galilee. The feast of Tabernacles fell upon the autumnal equinox. Six months were yet to roll away before the fatal end. But during this interval Jesus did not see again his dear provinces of the North. The grateful days are passed; he must now tread step by step the painful path which shall end in the agonies of death.

* Matt., xvi, 20-21; Mark, viii, 30-31.
† John, vii, 1.
‡ John, vii, 5.
‖ John, vii, 10

His disciples and the pious women who waited on him met him in Judea.* But to him how changed were all things here! Jesus was a stranger in Jerusalem. He felt that there was here a wall of resistance which he could not penetrate. Surrounded by snares and objections, he was incessantly pursued by the ill-will of the Pharisees.† Instead of this unlimited facility of faith, the happy gift of young natures, which he found in Galilee, instead of these mild and gentle people to whom objection (which is always the fruit of some little malevolence and indocility) found no access, he encountered here at every step an obstinate incredulity, upon which the means of action which had succeeded so well in the North produced little effect. His disciples, being Galileans, were despised. Nicodemus, who had on one of his previous journeys had an interview with him by night, almost compromised himself with the Sanhedrin for attempting to defend him. "What! art thou also a Galilean?" said they; "search the Scriptures; can a prophet come out of Galilee?"‡

The city, as we have already said, was unpleasant unto Jesus. Thus far, he had always avoided the great centers, preferring for his field of action the country and towns of small importance. Many of the precepts which he gave the apostles were absolutely inapplicable outside of a simple society of humble people.‖ Having no idea of the world, accustomed to his friendly Galilean communism, naivetes were constantly escaping him, which at Jerusalem might appear singu

* Matt., xxvii, 55; Mark, xv, 41. Luke, xxiii, 49, 55.
† John, vii, 20, 25, 30, 32.
‡ John, vii, 50 seqq.
‖ Matt., x, 11-13; Mark, vi, 10; Luke, x, 5-8.

lar.* His imagination, his taste for nature found itself constrained within these walls. The true religion was not to spring from the tumult of cities, but from the tranquil serenity of the fields.

The arrogance of the priests rendered the porches of the temple distasteful to him. One day, some of his disciples, who knew Jerusalem better than he, wished to attract his attention to the beauty of the buildings of the temple, the admirable selection of materials, and the votive offerings which covered the walls: "See ye all these things," said he; "verily I say unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another."† He refused to admire anything except a poor widow who was passing at that moment, and threw into the treasury a small coin: "She has given more than they all," said he; "the others have given out of their abundance; she, of her want."‡ This manner of critically regarding all that was done at Jerusalem, of exalting the poor who gave little, and abasing the rich who gave much,‖ of blaming the opulent clergy who did nothing for the good of the people, naturally exasperated the priestly caste. The seat of a conservative aristocracy, the temple, like the Moslem *haram* which has supplanted it, was the last place in the world in which the revolution could succeed. Imagine an innovator of our day going to preach the overthrow of Islamism about the Mosque of Omar. Here was, however, the center of Jewish life, the point at which he must conquer or die. Upon this Calvary, where certainly Jesus suffered more than at Golgotha, his

* Matt., xxi, 3; xxvi, 18; Mark, xi, 3; xiv, 13-14; Luke, xix, 31; xxii, 10-12.
† Matt., xxiv, 1-2; Mark, xiii, 1-2; Luke, xix, 44; xxi, 5-6. Cf. Mark, xi, 11.
‡ Mark, xii, 41 seqq.; Luke, xxi, 1 seqq. ‖ Mark, xii, 41.

days rolled by in dispute and in acrimony, in wearisome controversies concerning canonical law and exegesis, in which his great moral elevation secured him little advantage, nay, rather gave him a species of inferiority.

In the midst of this troubled life, the kindly and sensitive heart of Jesus succeeded in creating for itself an asylum in which he had much sweet enjoyment. After passing the day in the disputes of the temple, Jesus descended at evening into the valley of Cedron, took a little repose in the orchard of a farming establishment (probably for the manufacture of oil) named *Gethsemane*,* which served as a pleasure-garden for the inhabitants, and went to pass the night upon the Mount of Olives, which bounds the horizon of the city on the east.† This side is the only one which, in the environs of Jerusalem, presents an aspect in any degree verdant and cheerful. Plantations of olive, fig and palm trees were numerous and gave their names to the villages, farms or enclosures of Bethphage, Gethsemane, and Bethany.‡ There were upon the Mount of Olives two great cedars, the memory of which was long preserved among the exiled Jews; their branches served as an asylum for clouds of doves, and under their shade little bazaars were established.‖ This whole suburb was to a certain extent the quarter of Jesus and his disciples; they seem to have known it field by field and house by house.

* Mark, xi, 19; Luke, xxii, 39, John, xviii, 1-2. This orchard could not have been far from the place where the piety of the Catholics has surrounded some old olive trees with a wall. The word *Gethsemane* seems to signify "an oil-press."

† Luke, xxi, 37; xxii, 39; John, viii, 1-2.

‡ Talm. of Bab., *Pesachim*, 53 *a*.

‖ Talm. of Jerus., *Taanith*, iv, 8.

The village of Bethany, in particular,* situated at the summit of the hill, upon the slope towards the Dead Sea and the Jordan, six miles from Jerusalem, was the favorite resting-place of Jesus.† He there made the acquaintance of a family composed of three persons, two sisters and a brother, whose friendship was very dear to him.‡ Of the two sisters, one, named Martha, was an obliging, kind and eager person;‖ the other, on the contrary, named Mary, pleased Jesus by a species of languor,§ and by her largely developed speculative instincts. Often seated at the feet of Jesus, she forgot to attend to the duties of material life. Her sister, at such times, upon whom fell all the labor, complained gently: "Martha, Martha, said Jesus unto her, thou art careful and troubled about many things: but one thing is needful; and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her."¶ The brother, Eleazer, or Lazarus, was also much beloved by Jesus.** Finally, a certain Simon the Leper, who was the owner of the house, constituted, it appears, a part of the family.†† It was there, in the embrace of a pious friendship, that Jesus forgot the disgusts of public life. In this tranquil household, he found consolation for the annoyances which the Pharisees and the Scribes never ceased to excite against him. He often seated himself upon the Mount of Olives, opposite Mount Moriah,‡‡ and fixed his eyes upon the splendid perspective of the terraces of the temple and its roofs covered

* Now *El-Azirie* (from *El-Azir*, the Arabian name of Lazarus); in the Christian texts of the middle ages, *Lazarium*.

† Matt., xxi, 17-18; Mark, xi, 11-12.

‡ John, xi, 5.

‖ Luke, x, 38-42; John, xii, 2.

§ John, xi, 20.

¶ Luke, x, 38 seqq.

** John, xi, 35-36.

†† Matt., xxvi, 6; Mark, xiv, 3; Luke, vii, 40, 43; John, xii, 1 seqq.

‡‡ Mark, xiii 3.

with sparkling metallic plates. This prospect inspired strangers with admiration; at sunrise especially, the sacred mountain dazzled the eyes and appeared like a mass of snow and gold.* But a deep feeling of sadness embittered to Jesus the spectacle which filled all other Israelites with joy and pride. "Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, exclaimed he at such bitter moments, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!"†

Not that many good souls, here as well as in Galilee, were not touched. But such was the weight of the dominant orthodoxy that very few dared confess it. Men feared to discredit themselves in the eyes of the Hierosolymites by joining the school of a Galilean. They would have risked being driven out of the synagogue, which in a mean and bigoted society was the greatest possible affront.‡ Excommunication, moreover, entailed the confiscation of property.‖ By ceasing to be a Jew a man did not become a Roman, he was left without defense against the power of a theocratic legislation of the most atrocious severity. One day, the under officers of the temple, who had attended one of the discourses of Jesus and had been enchanted with it, came to confide their doubts to the priest: "Have any of the rulers or of the Pharisees believed on him," was the reply: "this people who knoweth not the Law, are cursed."§ Jesus remained thus at Jerusalem a countryman admired by countrymen like

* Josephus, *B. J.*, V, v, 6.
† Matt., XXIII, 37; Luke, XIII, 34.
‡ John, VII, 13; XII, 42-43; XIX, 38.
‖ I Esdr., X. 8; Heb., X, 34; Talm. of Jerus., *Moed katon*, III, 1.
§ John, VII, 45 seqq.

himself, but repelled by all the aristocracy of the nation. The leaders of schools and sects were too numerous for the appearance of another to create much excitement. His voice gained little fame at Jerusalem. Prejudices of race and sect, the direct enemies of the spirit of the gospel, were too deeply rooted there.

His teaching, in this new world, necessarily became greatly modified. His beautiful sermons, which were always calculated to affect the young imagination and the moral purity of the conscience of his auditors, here fell upon stone. He himself, so at ease on the shore of his charming little lake, was constrained and thrown out of his proper element in the presence of pedants. His perpetual affirmations concerning himself began to be somewhat wearisome.* He was obliged to make himself a controversialist, a jurist, an expounder, and a theologian. His conversations, ordinarily full of grace, become a running fire of disputes,† an interminable succession of scholastic battles. His harmonious genius is extenuated in insipid argumentations upon the Law and the prophets,‡ in which we would sometimes prefer not to see him act the part of the aggressor.‖ He lends himself, with a condescension that wounds us, to the captious inquiries which quibblers without tact force upon him.§ In general, he extricated himself from embarrassment with great address. His reasonings, it is true, were often subtle (simplicity of mind and subtlety touch each other; when the simple man would reason, he is always a little sophistical); we can see that some-

* John, VIII, 13 seqq.
† Matt. XXI, 23-37.
‡ Matt., XXII, 23 seqq.
‖ Matt., XXII, 42 seqq.
§ Matt., XXII, 36 seqq., 46.

times he seeks misunderstandings, and purposely prolongs them ;* his ratiocination, judged by the rules of Aristotelean logic, is very weak. But when the peerless charm of his spirit could manifest itself, he was triumphant. One day some one thought to embarrass him by presenting an adulterous woman and asking him how she should be treated. We know the admirable reply of Jesus.† The acute raillery of the man of the world, tempered by a divine goodness, could find expression in no more exquisite manner. But the wit which is allied to moral grandeur is that which fools can least pardon. When he pronounced these words of a discernment so just and so pure, "He that is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone," Jesus pierced hypocrisy to the heart, and at the same moment signed his own death warrant.

It is probable, indeed, that without the exasperation caused by so many bitter retorts, Jesus might long have remained unknown, and have been lost in the terrible tempest which was soon to overwhelm the whole Jewish nation. The high priests and the Sadducees felt for him contempt rather than hatred. The great priestly families, the *Boethusim*, the family of Hanan, were fanatical in nothing but repose. The Sadducees, like Jesus, repelled the "traditions" of the Pharisees.‡ By a very strange singularity, it was these unbelievers, denying the resurrection, the oral law, and th

* See especially the discussions reported by John, chap. VII, for example; it i true that the authenticity of such fragments is only relative.

† John, VIII 3 seqq. This passage did not constitute, at first, a part of the Gospel of John: it is wanting in the most ancient manuscripts, and the text of it is uncertain. Nevertheless, it is a primitive evangelical tradition, as is proved by the striking particularity of verses 6 and 8, which are not in the style of Luke, and of the second hand compilers, who state nothing which does not explain itself. This history was continued, it would seem, in the Gospel according to the Hebrews (Papias, cited by Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.*, III, 39).

‡ Jos., *Ant.*, XIII, x, 6; XVIII, i, 4.

existence of angels, who were the genuine Jews, or, to speak more properly, the ancient law in its simplicity no longer satisfied the religious needs of the time, those who held strictly to it and rejected the modern inventions seemed to the devotees impious, much as an evangelical Protestant now appears an infidel in orthodox countries. At all events, it was not from such a party that a very severe reaction against Jesus could come. The official priesthood, looking towards the political power and ultimately allied with it, comprehended nothing of these enthusiastic movements. It was the Pharisaic bourgeoisie, the innumerable *soferim* or scribes, living by the knowledge of the "traditions," who took alarm, and who were in reality menaced in their prejudices and their interests by the teaching of the new master.

One of the most constant efforts of the Pharisees was to draw Jesus into the arena of political questions and to compromise him with the party of Juda the Gaulonite. The tactics were skillful; for it required the profound ingenuity of Jesus never to have become imbroiled with the Roman authority, notwithstanding his proclamation of the kingdom of God. They wished to tear away this ambiguity, and to compel him to explain. One day, a group of Pharisees of the political order called "Herodians," (probably *Boethusim*) approached him, and under the appearance of pious zeal 'Master, said they, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man; for thou regardest not the person of men. Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar, or not?" They hoped for an answer which would give a pretext for

delivering him to Pilate. That of Jesus was admirable. He caused the image upon the current coin to be shown him. "Render, said he, unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's."* Deep words which decided the future of Christianity! Words of perfect spirituality and a marvellous justness, which founded the separation of the spiritual from the temporal, and established the foundation of true liberalism and of true civilization!

His gentle and penetrating genius inspired him, when he was alone among his disciples, with accents full of charm: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold is a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. The sheep hear his voice; and he calleth them out: he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him; for they know his voice. The thief cometh not but to steal and to kill and to destroy. The hireling, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth. But I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine; and I lay down my life for my sheep."† The idea of a speedy solution of the crisis of humanity comes before him: "When the branch of the fig-tree, said he, is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh. Lift up your eyes and look upon the world; it is white for the harvest."‡

His vigorous eloquence was always exhibited when he was called to combat hypocrisy. "The scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever

* Matt., XII, 15 seqq.; Mark, XII, 13 seqq.; Luke, XX, 20 seqq. Comp. Talm. o. Jerus., *Sanhedrin*, II, 3.
† John, X, 1-16.
‡ Matt., XXIV, 32; Mark, XIII, 28; Luke, XXI, 30; John, IV, 35.

they bid you observe, that observe and do: but do not ye after their works; for they say and do not. For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers."

"But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries,* and enlarge the borders of their garments,† and love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, 'Master!' Woe unto them!

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! who have taken the key of knowledge and use it only to shut up the kingdom of heaven against men!‡ Ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in. Woe unto you, for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him two-fold more the child of hell than yourselves. Woe unto you, for you are as graves which appear not, and over which men walk unawares!‖

"Ye fools and blind! who pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy and faith; these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other un-

* *Tot-foth* or *tefillin*, plates of metal or bands of parchment, containing passages of the Law, which the Jewish devotees wore on the forehead and the left arm, literally carrying out the passages *Ex.*, XIII. 9; Deut., VI, 8; XI, 18.

† *Zizith*, red borders or fringes, which the Jews wore on the corner of their mantles to distinguish them from pagans (*Numbers*, XV, 38–39; Deut., XXII, 12).

‡ The Pharisees exclude men from the kingdom of God by their fastidious casuistry, which renders the entrance too difficult, and discourages the simple

‖ Contact with graves rendered impure. So they took heed to mark carefully their outline upon the ground. Talm. of Bab., *Baba Bathra* 58 *a*; *Baba Metsia*, 45 *b*. The reproach that Jesus addresses here to the Pharisees is that they have invented a multitude of petty precepts which are violated thoughtlessly, and which serve only to multiply transgressions of the Law.

done. Blind guides, who strain your wine for a gnat, and swallow a camel, woe unto you!

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye make clean the outside of the cup and of the platter,* but within they are full of extortion and of excess. Blind Pharisee,† cleanse first that which is within; then mayst thou look to the cleanliness of that which is without."‡

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres,‖ which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness. Even so ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.

"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets. Wherefore, ye be witnesses unto yourselves, that ye are the children of them that killed the prophets. Fill ye up then the measure of your fathers. Therefore also said the Wisdom of God,§ "I will send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes; and some of them ye shall kill and crucify, and some of

* The purification of dishes was subject among the Pharisees to the most complex rules (Mark, VII, 4).

† This epithet, often repeated (Matt., XXIII, 17, 19, 24, 26), contains perhaps an allusion to the habit which certain Pharisees had of walking with closed eyes in affectation of sanctity. See above, p. 281.

‡ Luke (XI, 37 seqq.) supposes, not without reason, perhaps, that this verse was spoken at a meal, in response to the empty scruples of the Pharisees.

‖ Tombs being impure, it was customary to whitewash them, as a warning not to approach any. See preceding page, note ‖, and Mischna, *Maasar scheni*, V, 1 Talm. of Jerus., *Schekalim*, I, 1; *Maasar scheni*, V, 1; *Moed katon*, I, 2; *Sota*, IX, 1; Talm. of Bab., *Moed katon*, 5 *a*. Perhaps there is in the comparison of which Jesus makes use an allusion to the "painted Pharisee." See above, p. 281)

§ From what book this is quoted is unknown.

them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel, unto the blood of Zachariás, son of Barachias,* whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, It shall be required of this generation."†

His terrible dogma of the substitution of the Gentiles, this idea that the kingdom of God was to be transferred to others, those for whom it was destined not having desired it,‡ came like a bloody menace before the aristocracy, and his title of Son of God, which he openly avowed in vivid parables,‖ in which his enemies played the part of murderers of the heavenly messengers, was a defiance to legal Judaism. The bold appeal which he addressed to the poor was yet more seditious. He declared that he had come to open the eyes of the blind, and to make blind those who thought they saw.§ One day, his harshness towards the temple drew from him imprudent words: "This temple, made with hands, said he, I can, if I will, destroy it, and in three days I will rebuild of it another, not made with hands."¶ We know not well what sense Jesus attached to these words, in which his disciples endeavored to discover far-fetched allegories. But as a pretext only was desired, this expression was

* There is here a slight confusion, which is found in the Targum of Jonathan (*Lament.*, II. 20) between Zacharias, the son of Jehoiada, and Zacharias, the son of Barachias the prophet. It is of the first that mention is made (II Chron., XXIV. 21). The book of Chronicles, in which the assassination of Zacharias, the son of Jehoiada, is related, closes the Hebrew canon. This murder is the last in the list of murders of just men, arranged according to the order in which they are presented in the Bible. That of Abel is, on the other hand, the first.

† Matt., XXIII, 2–36; Mark, XII, 38-40; Luke, XI, 39–52; XX, 46–47.

‡ Matt., VIII. 1.–12; XX. 1 seqq.; XXI, 28 seqq.; 33 seqq., 43; XXII, 1 seqq.; Mark, XII, 1 seqq.; Luke, XX, 9 seqq.

‖ Matt., XXI, 37 seqq.; John, X, 36 seqq. § John, IX, 39.

¶ The most authentic form of this appears to be in Mark, XIV, 58; XV, 29. Cf. John, II, 19; Matt., XXVI, 61; XXVII, 40.

eagerly caught up. It will figure among the reasons for the sentence of Jesus to death, and will fall again upon his ear in the last agonies of Golgotha. These irritating discussions always ended in storms. The Pharisees cast stones at him,* in which they only executed an article of the Law, ordering them to stone without a hearing every prophet, even a miracle-worker, who should turn away the people from their ancient worship.† At other times, they called him mad, possessed, a Samaritan,‡ or sought even to kill him.‖ They took note of his words to invoke against him the laws of an intolerant theocracy, which the Roman domination had not yet abrogated.§

* John, VIII, 39; X, 31; XI, 8.
† *Deut.*, XIII, 1 seqq. Comp Luke, XX, 6; John, X, 33; II Cor., XI, 25.
‡ John, X, 20
‖ John, V, 18; VII, 1, 20, 25, 30; VIII, 37-40
§ Luke, XI, 53-54.

CHAPTER XXII.

MACHINATIONS OF THE ENEMIES OF JESUS.

Jesus passed the autumn and a part of the winter at Jerusalem. This season is rather cold there. Solomon's porch, with its covered galleries, was the place where he walked habitually.* This porch was composed of two galleries, formed by three rows of columns, and covered with a ceiling of carved wood.† It overlooked the valley of Cedron, which was undoubtedly less encumbered with ruins than it is at the present day. The eye, from the hight of the porch, could not reach the bottom of the ravine, and it seemed, from the steepness of the slope, that an abyss opened perpendicularly beneath the wall.‡ The other side of the valley already possessed its ornamentation of sumptuous tombs. Some of the monuments which are seen there at this day, are perhaps those cenotaphs in honor of the ancient prophets‖ which Jesus pointed at with his finger, when, seated under the porch, he hurled his anathemas at the official classes, who shel-

* John, x, 23.
† Jos., *B J.*, V, v, 2. Comp. *Ant.*, XV, xi, 5; XX, ix, 7.
‡ Jos., places cited.
‖ See above, p. 298. I am led to believe that the tombs said to be those of Zacharias and of Absalom were monuments of this kind. Cf. *Itin. a Burdig Hierus.*, p. 153 (edit. Schott.).

tered behind those colossal masses their hypocrisy or their vanity.*

At the end of the month of December, he celebrated at Jerusalem the festival established by Judas Maccabeus in memory of the purification of the temple after the sacrileges of Antiochus Epiphanes.† They called it also the "Feast of the Lights," because during the eight days of the feast they kept lamps burning in their houses.‡ Soon afterwards Jesus undertook a journey into Perea and upon the banks of the Jordan, that is to say, in the same countries which he had visited some years before, when he was following the school of John,‖ and where he had himself administered baptism. He there found, it seems, some solace, especially at Jericho. This city, whether as the commencement of a very important route, or on account of its gardens of perfumes, and its rich plantations,§ had a considerable receipt of custom. The chief collector, Zaccheus, a rich man, desired to see Jesus.¶ As he was of low stature, he climbed upon a sycamore tree near the road which the cortege must pass. Jesus was touched by this simplicity on the part of a person of consideration. He went to the house of Zaccheus, at the risk of producing scandal. There was much murmuring, indeed, at seeing him honor with a visit the house of a sinner. On taking leave Jesus declared his host a good son of Abraham. And as if to spite the orthodox, Zaccheus became a Saint: he gave, it is

* Matt., XXIII, 29; Luke, XI, 47.

† John, X, 22. Comp. I Macc., IV, 52 seqq.; II Macc., X, 6 seqq.

‡ Jos., *Ant.*, XII, VII, 7.

‖ John, X, 40. Cf. Matt., XIX, 2; Mark, X, 1. This journey is known to the synoptics But they seem to believe that Jesus made it coming from Galilee to Jerusalem by way of Perea.

§ Eccl., XXIV, 8; Strabo, XVI, II, 41; Justin, XXXVI, 3; Jos., *Ant.*, IV, VI, 1 XIV, IV, 1; XV, IV, 2.

¶ Luke, XIX, 1 seqq

said, the half of his goods to the poor, and repaired twofold the wrongs which he had committed. This was not, however, the only good fortune of Jesus. On going out of the city, the beggar Bartimeus* gave him great pleasure by persisting in calling him the "son of David," although he was bidden to be silent. The cycle of the Galilean miracles seemed for a moment to open again in this country, which many analogies associate with the provinces of the North. The delightful oasis of Jericho, then well watered, must have been one of the most beautiful places in Syria. Josephus speaks of it with the same admiration as of Galilee, and calls it as he does this last province, a "divine country."†

Jesus, after having fulfilled this species of pilgrimage to the localities of his first prophetic activity, returned to his cherished abode at Bethany, where occurred a singular event which seems to have had decisive consequences upon the end of his life.‡ Wearied out by the ill reception with which the kingdom of God met in the capital, the friends of Jesus desired a great miracle which should have a powerful effect upon Hierosolymite incredulity. The resurrection of a man well known at Jerusalem would be more convincing than anything else. We must recollect here that the essential condition of true criticism is to comprehend the diversity of periods, and to lay aside those instinctive repugnances which are the fruits of a purely national education. We must also recollect that in this impure and oppressive city of Jerusalem Jesus was no longer himself. His conscience by the fault

* Matt., xx, 29; Mark, x, 46 seqq.; Luke, xviii, 35.
† *B. J.*, IV, viii, 3. Comp. *ibid.*, I, vi, 6; I, xviii, 5 and *Ant.*, XV, iv, 2.
‡ John, xi, 1 seqq.

of men, and not by his own, had lost something of its primitive clearness. Desperate, pushed to extremities, he no longer retained possession of himself. His mission imposed itself upon him, and he obeyed the torrent. As always happens in great and divine careers, he suffered the miracles which public opinion demanded of him, rather than performed them. At the distance at which we are, and in the presence of a single text, presenting evident traces of artifices of composition, it is impossible to decide whether, in the present case, the whole is a fiction or whether a real event occurring at Bethany served as a basis for the rumors which were bruited abroad. We must recognize, however, that the character of the narrative of John is, in some respects, entirely different from that of the stories of miracles, the offspring of popular imagination, which fill the synoptic gospels. Let us add that John is the only Evangelist who has any precise knowledge of the relations of Jesus with the family of Bethany, and that it is hard to understand how a popular creation should have come to take its place in a framework of recollections so entirely personal. It seems, therefore, probable, that the prodigy in question was not one of those purely legendary miracles for which no one is responsible. In other words, we think that something took place at Bethany which was regarded as a resurrection.

Fame already attributed to Jesus two or three events of this kind.* The family of Bethany may have been led, almost without suspecting it, to the important act which was desired. Jesus was there adored. It seems that Lazarus was sick, and that it was indeed in con-

* Matt., IX, 18 seqq.; Mark, V, 22 seqq; Luke, VII, 11 seqq.; VIII, 41 seqq

sequence of a message from his alarmed sisters, that Jesus left Perea.* The joy of his coming might recall Lazarus to life. Perhaps also the ardent desire to close the mouth of those who furiously denied the divine mission of their friend, may have carried these enthusiastic persons beyond all bounds. Perhaps Lazarus, still pale from his sickness, caused himself to be swathed in grave clothes, as one dead, and shut up in his family tomb. These tombs were large chambers cut in the rock, into which they entered through a square opening which was closed by an enormous flat stone. Martha and Mary came out to meet Jesus, and, without permitting him to enter Bethany, conducted him to the sepulchre. The emotion which Jesus experienced at the tomb of his friend, whom he thought dead,† may have been mistaken by the witnesses for that groaning, that trembling‡ which accompanies miracles; popular opinion holding that the divine virtue is in man an element, as it were, epileptic and convulsive. Jesus, (still following the hypothesis above enunciated,) desired to see once more him whom he had loved, and, the stone having been removed, Lazarus came forth with his grave clothes and his head bound about with a napkin. This apparition must naturally have been regarded by all as a resurrection. Faith knows no other law than the interest of what it believes to be the truth. The end which it pursues being in its view absolutely holy, it makes no scruple about invoking bad arguments in behalf of its proposition when good ones do not succeed. If this evidence is not real, so many others are! . . . If this prodigy is not genuine, so many others have been! . . .

* John, xi, 3 seqq. † John, xi, 35 seqq. ‡ John, xi, 33, 38

Thoroughly persuaded that Jesus was a worker of miracles, Lazarus and his two sisters may have aided the performance of one, as so many pious men, convinced of the truth of their religion, have sought to triumph over human obstinacy by means of the weakness of which they were well aware. The state of their conscience was that of the Stigmatists, the Convulsionists, the Obsessed nuns, led on by the influence of the world in which they live and by their own belief in the pretended acts. As to Jesus, he had no more power than St. Bernard, or St. Francis d'Assisi to moderate the avidity of the multitude and of his own disciples for the marvellous. Death, moreover, was in a few days to restore to him his divine liberty and to snatch him from the fatal necessities of a character which became each day more exacting, more difficult to sustain. Everything seems to lead to the belief, indeed, that the miracle of Bethany contributed directly to hasten the death of Jesus.* Those who had witnessed it went through the city, and spoke much of it. The disciples related the act with scenic details arranged with a view to augment its effect. The other miracles of Jesus were incidental acts accepted spontaneously by faith, magnified by popular fame, and which, when passed, were not reexamined. This was really an event for which public notoriety was claimed, and by which they hoped to close the mouths of the Pharisees.† The enemies of Jesus were greatly irritated at all this fame. They tried, it is said, to kill Lazarus.‡ It is certain that immediately a council was assembled by the chief priests,‖ and that in this council the ques

* John, xi, 46 seqq.; xii, 2, 9 seqq.; 17 seqq.
† John, xii, 9-10, 17-18. ‡ John, xii 16. ‖ John, xi, 47 seqq

tion was distinctly put: "Whether Jesus and Judaism could both live?" To put the question was to answer it, and without being a prophet, as the Evangelist has it, the high priest might very well pronounce his bloody axiom: "It is expedient that one man should die for the whole people."

"The high priest for that year," to borrow an expression of the fourth evangelist, which well exhibits the degraded condition to which the sovereign pontificate had then fallen, was Joseph Caiaphas, appointed by Valerius Gratus, and wholly devoted to the Romans. Since Jerusalem had been governed by the procurators, the office of high priest had become subject to removal; dismissal from it happened almost every year.* Caiaphas, nevertheless, maintained himself longer than the rest. He was installed in his charge in the year 25, and did not lose it until the year 36. We know nothing of his character. Many circumstances lead to the belief that his power was merely nominal. Beside and above him, indeed, we always see another personage, who appears to have exercised, at the decisive moment which we are considering, a preponderating power.

This personage was the father-in-law of Caiaphas, Hanan or Annas,† son of Seth, the old deposed high priest, who in the midst of this instability of the pontificate, really retained all its authority. Hanan had received the high priesthood from the legate Quirinius in the year 7 of our era. He lost his functions in the year 14 on the advent of Tiberius; but he was still very highly respected. He continued to be called

* Jos., *Ant.*, XV, III, 1; XVIII, II, 2; V, 3; XX, IX, 1, 4

† The *Ananus* of Josephus. It is thus that the Hebrew name *Johanan* became in Greek *Joannes* or *Joannas*

"high priest," although he was out of office,* and to be consulted upon all important questions. For fifty years, the pontificate remained almost without interruption in his family: five of his sons successively assumed that dignity,† without counting Caiaphas, who was his son in-law. It was what was called the "priesty Family," as if in it the priesthood had become hereditary.‡ The higher duties of the temple also, almost wholly devolved on them.‖ Another family, it is true, alternated with that of Hanan in the pontificate; the family of Boëthus.§ But the *Boethusim*, who owed the origin of their fortune to a cause in no wise honorable, were far less esteemed by the pious citizens. Hanan was, therefore, really the head of the sacerdotal party. Caiaphas did nothing except through him; it had become a custom to associate their names, and that of Hanan indeed always had the first place.¶ It is easy to comprehend that under this regime of a pontificate, annual and changed according to the caprice of the pro-consuls, an old pontiff, who had kept the secret of the traditions, had witnessed the succession of many fortunes younger than his own, and preserved credit enough to have the power delegated to persons who were subordinate to him in the family relation, must have been a very important personage. Like the aristocracy of the temple,** he was a Sadducee, a "sect," says Josephus, "particularly severe in their judgments." All his sons were also ardent persecutors.†† One of them, named, like his father

* John, XVIII, 15–23; *Acts*, IV, 6.
† Jos., *Ant.*, XX, IX 1
‡ Jos., *Ant.*, XV, III, 1; *B J.*, IV, V; 6 and 7; *Acts*, IV, 6.
‖ Jos., *Ant.*, XX, IX, 3.
§ Jos., *Ant.*, XV, IX, 3; XIX, VI, 2; VIII, 1.
¶ Luke, III, 2.
** *Acts*, V, 17.
†† Jos., *Ant.*, XX, IX, 1.

Hanan, caused James, a brother of the Lord, to be stoned, under circumstances which are not without analogy to the death of Jesus. The spirit of the family was haughty, bold, and cruel;* it had that peculiar sort of disdainful and suspicious malignity which characterizes Jewish politics. Thus it is upon Hanan and his relatives that should rest the responsibility of all the acts which are to follow. It was Hanan (or the party which he represented) who killed Jesus. Hanan was the principal actor in this terrible drama, and far more than Caiaphas, more even than Pilate, he should have borne the weight of the maledictions of humanity.

In the mouth of Caiaphas it is that the Evangelist places the decisive declaration which led to the sentence of death upon Jesus.† It was supposed that the high priest possessed a certain gift of prophecy; the declaration became thus to the Christian community an oracle full of deep meaning. But this declaration, whoever may have pronounced it, was the thought of the whole sacerdotal party. This party was very strongly opposed to popular seditions. It sought to check religious enthusiasts, logically foreseeing that by their exalted preaching, they would lead to the total ruin of the nation, Although the agitation excited by Jesus was in no wise temporal, the priests saw as the final consequence of that agitation, an aggravation of the Roman yoke, and the fall of the temple, the source of their riches and their honors.‡ Certainly the causes which were to lead, thirty-seven years later, to the destruction of Jerusalem, did not lie in infant Christianity They existed in Jerusalem itself, and not in Galilee We cannot say, however, that the motive alleged, in

* Jos., *Ant.*, XX, IX, 1. † John, XI, 49-50. Cf. *ibid.*, XVIII, 14. ‡ John, XI, 48.

this instance, by the priests was so utterly improbable that it must be accused of bad faith. In a general sense, Jesus, if he succeeded, was bringing on, very certainly, the ruin of the Jewish nation. Starting from principles accepted at the outset by all ancient polity, Hanan and Caiaphas were right in saying: "Better the death of one man than the ruin of a people." This reasoning seems to us detestable. But this reasoning has been that of all conservative parties from the origin of human societies. "The party of order" (I use this expression in the mean and narrow sense) has always been the same. Thinking that the final word of government is to check popular emotions, it believes that it is doing an act of patriotism when it prevents by juridical murder the tumultuous effusion of blood. Little thoughtful of the future, it dreams not that by declaring war against all progress, it runs the risk of wounding the idea which is destined, some day, to triumph. The death of Jesus was one of the thousand applications of this polity. The movement which he directed, was altogether spiritual; but it was a movement; and for that alone the men of order, convinced that the one thing needful for humanity is not to be agitated, must prevent the new spirit from spreading. Never has been seen by a more striking example how such conduct defeats its end. Left free, Jesus would have exhausted himself in a hopeless struggle against the impossible. The unintelligent hatred of his enemies, determined the success of his work, and put the seal upon his divinity.

The death of Jesus was thus resolved upon in the month of February or the beginning of March.* But

* John, xi, 53.

Jesus escape ' for some time longer. He withdrew to a city but little known, called Ephraim or Ephron, in the direction of Bethel, a short day's journey from Jerusalem.* He remained there for some days with his disciples, allowing the storm to pass over. But orders for his arrest so soon as he should be found in Jerusalem, had been given. The solemnity of the passover was approaching, and it was thought that Jesus, according to his custom, would come to celebrate this festival at Jerusalem.†

* John, xi, 54. Cf. *II Chron.*, xiii, 19; Jos., *B. J.*, IV, ix, 9; Eusebius and St. Jerome, *De situ et nom. loc hebr.*, at the words Ἐφρών and Ἐφραΐμ.

† John, xi, 55-56. For the order of occurrences in all this portion, we follow the narrative of John. The synoptics do not seem well informed concerning that period of the life of Jesus which preceded the passion.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE LAST WEEK OF JESUS.

He set out, in fact, with his disciples, to visit for the last time the unbelieving city. The hopes of his followers became more and more exalted. All believed, in going up to Jerusalem, that the kingdom of God was there to be manifested.* The impiety of men being at its acme, was a mighty sign that the consummation was near. Their conviction of this was such, that they already disputed with each other the precedence in the kingdom.† This was, it is said, the moment which Salome chose to ask for her sons the seats on the right and on the left of the Son of man.‡ The master, on the contrary, was occupied with grave thoughts. Sometimes he suffered to escape a gloomy feeling of resentment towards his enemies; he related the parable of a nobleman, who goes into a far country to receive a kingdom and to return; but hardly has he departed when his citizens will have him no more. The king returns, orders before him those who have desired that he should not reign over them, and

* Luke, xix, 11. † Luke, xxii, 24 seqq.
‡ Matt., xx, 20 seqq.; Mark, x, 35 seqq.

commanded them all to be put to death.* At other times he rudely destroyed the illusions of his disciples. As they were traveling over the rocky roads north of Jerusalem, Jesus walked thoughtfully at the head of the group of his companions. All looked upon him in silence, with a sentiment of awe, not daring to question him. Already, on various occasions, he had spoken to them of his future sufferings, and they had listened unwillingly.† Jesus finally broke the silence, and, no longer concealing his presentiments, he spoke to them openly of his approaching end.‡ There was great sadness in all the company. The disciples were expecting soon to see the sign appear in the clouds. The inaugural cry of the "kingdom of God;" "Blessed be he who cometh in the name of the Lord," already rang through the throng in joyous accents. This bloody perspective disturbed them. At each step of the fatal journey, the kingdom of God drew near or fled away in the mirage of their dreams. As for him, he became confirmed in the thought that he was about to die, but that this death would save the world,§ the misunderstanding between him and his disciples widened every moment.

It was the custom to come up to Jerusalem some days before the Passover, in order to prepare for it. Jesus arrived after the rest, and for a moment his enemies thought themselves frustrated in their hope of seizing him.¶ On the sixth day before the feast (Saturday the 8th of Nisan, March 28th),** he finally ar-

* Luke, XIX, 12 27. † Matt., XVI, 21 seqq.; Mark, VIII, 31 seqq.
‡ Matt., XX, 17 seqq.; Mark, X, 31 seqq.; Luke, XVIII, 31 seqq.
‖ Matt., XXIII, 39; Luke, XIII, 35.
§ Matt., XX, 28. ¶ John, XI, 56.
** The passover was celebrated on the fourteenth of Nisan. Now, in the year 33, the first of Nisan corresponded to Saturday, March 21st.

rived at Bethany. He stopped, as was his custom, at the house of Lazarus, Martha and Mary, or that of Simon the Leper. They gave him a grand reception. There was at the house of Simon the Leper* a dinner at which a large number of persons were assembled, attracted by the desire to see him, and also to see Lazarus, of whom so many things had been related for some days past. Lazarus was seated at a table, and attracted the attention of all. Martha served according to her custom.† It seems as though they sought by an increase of the external manifestations of respect to overcome the coldness of the public and to signalize decidedly the high dignity of the guest whom they were entertaining. Mary, in order to give the repast a more festal appearance, entered during the dinner, bearing a vase of perfume, which she poured upon the feet of Jesus. Then she broke the vase, according to an ancient usage which was to destroy the vessels used in serving a stranger of distinction.‡ Finally, carrying the manifestations of her worship to extremes hitherto unknown, she prostrated herself and wiped the feet of her master with her long hair.‖ The whole house was filled with the pleasant odor of the perfume, to the great joy of all, except the avaricious Judas of Kerioth. Considering the economical habits of the community, it really was prodigality. The greedy treasurer calculated at once for how much the perfume might have been sold, and what it would

* Matt., xxvi, 6; Mark, xiv, 3. Cf. Luke, vii, 40, 43–44.

† It is very common in the East, that a person who is attached to you by a bond of affection or of domesticity should go to serve you when you go out to dine.

‡ I have seen this custom still practiced at Sour.

‖ We must remember that the feet of the guests were not, as among us, concealed under the table, but extended level with the bod upon the divan or *triclinium*.

have produced for the poor. This sentiment devoid of affection, which seemed to place something else above himself, was displeasing to Jesus. He was fond of honors; for honors served his purpose and established his title as the Son of David. So when they spoke to him of the poor, he replied rather sharply: "the poor ye have always with you, but me ye have not always." And rising to exaltation, he promised immortality to the woman who at this critical moment gave him a pledge of love.*

The next day (Sunday, the 9th of Nisan), Jesus went down from Bethany to Jerusalem.† When, at a turn of the road, upon the summit of the Mount of Olives, he saw the city spread out before him, it is said that he wept over it, and addressed to it a last appeal.‡ At the foot of the mountain, not far from the gate, entering upon the belt of land near the eastern wall of the city, which was called Bethphage, doubtless from the fig trees with which it was planted,‖ he had yet another moment of human satisfaction.§ The news of his arrival had spread abroad. The Galileans who had come to the feast were rejoiced, and prepared him a modest triumph. They brought him a she ass, followed, as usual, by her colt. The Galileans spread their finest garments in the way of housings upon this poor beast, and made him sit thereon. Others, moreover, spread their vestments along the road, and strewed it with

* Matt., XXVI. 6 seqq.; Mark, XIV, 3 seqq.; John, XI, 2; XII, 2 seqq. Comp. Luke. VII, 36 seqq.

† John, XII, 12.

‡ Luke, XIX, 41 seqq.

‖ Mischna, *Menachoth*, XI, 2; Talm. of Bab., *Sanhedrin*, 14 *b*; *Pesachim*, 63 *b* 91 *a*, *Sota*, 45 *a*; *Baba metsia*, 85 *a*. It results from these passages that Bethphage was a sort of *pomerium*, which extended to the foot of the eastern foundation of the temple, and which also had its own wall of enclosure. The passages Matt. XXI, 1, Luke, XIX. 29, do not exactly imply that Bethphage was a village, as Eusebius and St. Jerome have supposed.

§ Matt., XXI, 1 seqq.; Mark, XI, 1 seqq.; Luke, XIX, 29 seqq., John, XII, 12 seqq.

green boughs. The multitude that went before and that followed bearing palms, cried: "Hosanna to the son of David. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord!" Some persons even went so far as to give him the title of "king of Israel."* "Rabbi, make them hold their peace," said the Pharisees to him "If they should hold their peace, the stones would cry out," replied Jesus, and he entered the city. The Hierosolymites, who scarcely knew him, asked who he was: "This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth and Galilee," was the reply. Jerusalem was a city of about fifty thousand souls.† A little event, like the entrance of a stranger of celebrity, or the arrival of a band of provincials, or a movement of the people in the avenues of the town, could not fail, under ordinary circumstances, to be soon noised about. But at the time of the feasts, the confusion was extreme.‡ Jerusalem, on those days, belonged to strangers. It is, therefore, among them that the commotion appears to have been greatest. Some proselytes who spoke Greek and who had come to the feast, became curious, and desired to see Jesus. They applied to his disciples;‖ it is not known what resulted from this interview. As for Jesus, he went, according to his custom, to pass the night in his dear village of Bethany.§ The three following days (Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday), he went down in the same manner to Jerusalem; after sunset

* Luke, XIX, 38; John, XII, 13.

† The figure 120,000, given by Hecateus (in Josephus, *Contra Apionem*, I, 22), appears exaggerated. Cicero speaks of Jerusalem as a paltry town (*Ad Atticum*, II, IX). The ancient enclosures, whatever system we adopt, could not contain a population quadruple the present, which is less than 15,000. See Robinson, *Bibl. Res.*, I, 421-4 2 (2nd edition); Fergusson, *Topogr. of Jerus.*, p. 51; Forster, *Syria and Palestine*, p. 82.

‡ Jos., *B. J.*, II, XIV, 3.

§ Matt., XXI, 17; Mark, XI, 11.

‖ John, XII, 20 seqq.

he returned either to Bethany or to the farms on the western slope of the Mount of Olives, where he had many friends.*

A deep sadness appears, during these last days, to have filled the soul of Jesus, ordinarily so cheerful and so serene. All the recitals agree, in attributing to him, before his arrest, a moment of hesitation and of trouble, a kind of anticipated death-agony. According to some, he cried out suddenly: "Father, save me from this hour."† It was believed that at that moment, a voice was heard from heaven; others said that an angel came to console him.‡ According to a widespread version, this took place in the garden of Gethsemane. Jesus, it is said, withdrew a stone's throw from his sleeping disciples, taking with him only Cephas and the two sons of Zebedee. Then he prayed with his face to the ground. His soul was sad unto death; a terrible anguish weighed upon him; but resignation to the divine will triumphed.‖ This scene, by virtue of that instinctive art which presided over the compilations of the synoptics, and which often makes them obedient to considerations of propriety or effect in the arrangements of events, has been assigned to the last night of Jesus, and to the moment of his arrest. Were this the true version, we could hardly understand how John, who must have been the intimate witness of so moving an episode, should not have spoken of it in his very circumstantial account of th evening of Thursday.§ All that can be said is, that

* Matt., xxi, 17-18; Mark, xi, 11-12, 19; Luke, xxi, 37-38.

† John, xii, 27 seqq. We can comprehend how the exaltation of John and his exclusive prepossession with the divine character of Jesus may have effaced from the recital the circumstances of natural weakness related by the synoptics.

‡ Luke; xxii, 43; John, xii, 28-29.

‖ Matt, xviii, 36 seqq., Mark, xiv, 32 seqq.; Luke, xxii, 39 seqq

§ This would be the more incomprehensible since John delights in bringing

during his last days, the immense burden of the mission he had accepted, weighed cruelly upon Jesus. Human nature awoke for a moment. He began perhaps to doubt of his work. Terror, hesitation seized upon him and threw him into a dejection worse than death. The man who has sacrificed repose and the natural compensations of life to a great idea, experiences a moment of sad reflection, when the image of death presents itself to him for the first time, and seeks to persuade him that all is vanity. Perhaps some one of those touching recollections which even the strongest souls preserve, and which at times pierce them like the sword, came to him at this moment. Did he recall the clear fountains of Galilee where he might have refreshed himself; the vineyard and fig-tree under which he might have been seated; the young maidens who might perhaps have consented to love him? Did he curse his bitter destiny, which had forbidden to him the joys conceded to all others? Did he regret his too lofty nature, and, the victim of his own grandeur, did he weep because he had not remained a simple artizan of Nazareth? We know not. For all these interior agitations were evidently a sealed book to his disciples. They comprehended nothing, and supplied by artless conjectures whatever was obscure to them in the great soul of their master. It is certain, at least, that his divine nature soon resumed the ascendancy. He might still have avoided death; he would not. The love of his work gained the victory. He accepted the draught of the cup even unto the lees. From this time, indeed, Jesus is again complete and without a cloud. The

out those circumstances which are personal to him, or of which he was the sole witness (XIII, 23 seqq.; XVIII, 15 seqq.; XIX, 26 seqq., 35; XX, 2 seqq.; XXI, 20 seqq.).

subtleties of the polemic, the credulity of the thaumaturgist and the exorcist are forgotten. Nothing remains but the incomparable hero of the Passion, the founder of the rights of free conscience, the perfect model upon which all suffering souls shall meditate for strength and consolation.

The triumph of Bethphage, this audacity of provincials celebrating the advent of their King-Messiah at the gates of Jerusalem, completed the exasperation of the Pharisees and the aristocracy of the temple. A new council was held on Wednesday, (the 12th of Nisan,) at the house of Joseph Caiaphas.* The immediate arrest of Jesus was resolved upon. A great regard for order and for a conservative policy controlled all their measures. The difficulty was to avoid scandal. As the feast of the Passover, which began that year on Friday, was a time of confusion and excitement, it was resolved to anticipate those days. Jesus was popular ;† a mob was apprehended. The arrest was therefore fixed for Thursday, the next day. It was determined also not to seize him in the temple, where he came every day,‡ but to spy out his habits, in order to seize him in some secret place. The officers of the priests sounded the disciples, hoping to obtain the needful information through their weakness or through their simplicity. They found what they sought in Judas of Kerioth. This wretch, from motives impossible to explain, betrayed his Master, gave all the necessary indications, and even took upon himself (although such an excess of perfidy is hardly credible) to conduct the squad which was to make the

* Matt., xxvi, 1-5; Mark, xiv, 1-2; Luke, xxii, 1-2.
† Matt., xxi, 46. ‡ Matt., xxvi, 55.

arrest. The memory of horror which the folly or the wickedness of this man left to the Christian tradition, must have led to some exaggeration in this. Judas hitherto had been a disciple with the rest; he had even the title of apostle; he had performed miracles, and cast out demons. Legend, which loves strong colors, could only admit into the cenaculum eleven saints and one reprobate. Reality does not proceed with such absolute discriminations. Avarice, which the synoptic gospels give as the motive for the crime in question, is not sufficient to explain it. It would be strange that the man who kept the purse, and who knew what he would lose by the death of the chief, should exchange the profits of his occupation* for a very trifling sum of money.† Might not Judas have been wounded in his self-love by the reproof which he received at the dinner at Bethany? Yet this is not enough. John would make him a thief and an unbeliever from the beginning,‡ a view which is entirely improbable. We prefer to believe in some feeling of jealousy, some intestine dissension. The peculiar hatred which John exhibits towards Judas,‖ confirms this hypothesis. Of a heart less pure than the rest, Judas may have assumed unconsciously the narrow sentiments of his office. By a mutation not uncommon in active life, he may have come to set the interests of the treasury above the very work it was intended to serve. The administrator may have killed the apostle. The murmur which escaped him at Bethany seems to indicate that at times he thought the master cost his spiritual family too dear. Undoubtedly

* John, xii, 6.
† John does not even speak of a payment of money.
‡ John, vi, 65; xii, 6.
‖ John, vi, 65, 71-72; xii, 6; xiii, 2, 27 seqq.

this mean economy had caused other collisions in the little society.

Without denying that Judas of Kerioth may have contributed to the arrest of his master, we think, therefore, that the maledictions with which he is loaded are in some degree unjust. His act was perhaps more a blunder than a crime. The conscience of the practical man is lively and just, but unstable and illogical. It cannot resist a sudden impulse. The secret societies of the republican party contained much earnestness and sincerity, and yet informers were very numerous among them. A slight offence was enough to make a member a traitor. But if the foolish desire for a few pieces of silver turned the head of poor Judas, it does not seem that he lost his moral sense entirely, since seeing the consequences of his fault, he repented,* and, it is said, killed himself.

Each moment, at this period, becomes awful, and has counted more than whole centuries in the history of humanity. We have reached Thursday, the 13th of Nisan, (April 2d.) On the evening of the next day the feast of the Passover commenced by the eating of the Paschal lamb. The feast continued through the seven following days, during which the unleavened bread was eaten. The first and the last of these seven days had a peculiar sanctity. The disciples were already occupied with preparations for the feast.† As to Jesus, we are led to believe that he knew the treachery of Judas, and that he suspected the fate which awaited him. In the evening he took his last supper with his disciples. It was not the ritual feast of the

* Matt., xxvii, 3 seqq.
† Matt., xxvi, 1 seqq. Mark, xiv, 12; Luke, xxii, 7; John, xiii, 29.

Passover, as was afterwards supposed by a mistake of one day;* but to the primitive Church the supper of Thursday was the true Passover, the seal of the new covenant. All the disciples referred to it their dearest memories, and a multitude of touching incidents which each retained of the master, were accumulated upon this repast, which became the corner-stone of Christian piety, and the starting-point of the most fruitful institutions.

There is no doubt, indeed, that the tender love with which the heart of Jesus was filled for the little church that surrounded him, overflowed at this hour.† His serene and mighty soul was yet light beneath the weight of the gloomy thoughts which beset him. He had a word for each one of his friends. Two among them, John and Peter, were the special objects of tender marks of attachment. John (at least he affirms so) lay upon the divan by the side of Jesus, and his head reposed upon the breast of the master. Towards the end of the meal the secret which weighed upon Jesus' heart almost escaped him: "Verily, said he, I say unto you that one of you shall betray me."‡ This was to those simple men a moment of anguish; they looked at one another, and each questioned himself. Judas was present; perhaps Jesus, who for some time had had reason to distrust him, sought by this saying to draw from his looks, or his embarrassment, a confession of his fault. But the unfaithfu

* This is the arrangement of the synoptics (Matt., xxvi. 17 seqq.; Mark, xiv. 12 seqq.; Luke, xxii, 7 seqq., 15. But John, whose narrative has for this portion a preponderating authority, expressly supposes that Jesus died the same day on which the lamb was eaten (xiii, 1-2, 29; xviii, 28; xix, 14, 31). The Talmud also makes Jesus die on the "eve of the Passover." (Talm. of Bab., *Sanhedrin*, 43 *a*, 67 *a*).

† John, xiii, 1 seqq.

‡ Matt., xxvi, 21 seqq.; Mark, xiv, 18 seqq.; Luke, xx, 21 seqq.; John, xiii, 21 seqq.; xxi, 20.

disciple did not lose his presence of mind; he dared even, it is said to ask like the rest: "Is it I, Rabbi?"

Meantime, the upright and virtuous soul of Peter was upon the rack. He made a sign to John to endeavor to learn of whom the master spoke. John who could converse with Jesus without being heard asked him the solution of this enigma. Jesus having nothing more than suspicions, would pronounce no name; he told John merely to notice to whom he should give the bread he was dipping. At the same time, he dipped the bread and offered it to Judas. John and Peter alone understood this. Jesus addressed to Judas a few words which contained a bitter reproach, but were not comprehended by the rest. It was supposed that Jesus was giving him orders for the feast of the morrow, and he went out.*

At the time, this supper seemed remarkable to no one, and apart from the apprehensions which the master imparted to his disciples, who but half understood him, nothing extraordinary occurred. But after the death of Jesus, a signification singularly solemn was attached to this evening, and the imagination of believers spread over it a hue of soft mysticism. What we remember best of a dear friend, is his last days. By an inevitable illusion, we lend to the conversations that we then had with him a meaning which they have received only from death; we gather into a few hours the memories of many years. Most of the disciples never saw their master after the supper of which we have spoken. It was the farewell banquet. At this repast, as well as at many others, Je-

* John, XIII, 21 seqq., which removes the improbability of the narrative of the synoptics.

sus practised his mysterious rite of the breaking of bread. As it was believed at an early period that this supper took place on the day of the Passover, and was the Paschal feast, the idea naturally resulted that the Eucharist was instituted at this supreme hour Starting from the hypothesis that Jesus knew before- and the precise moment of his death, the disciples must have been led to suppose that he reserved for his last hours a multitude of important acts. Moreover, as one of the fundamental ideas of the first Christians was that the death of Jesus was a sacrifice, replacing all those of the ancient Law, the "Last Supper," which they supposed to have taken place once for all on the evening before the Crucifixion, became the great sacrifice, the act of foundation of the new covenant, the sign of the blood shed for the salvation of all.* The bread and the wine, taken in connection with the death itself, were thus the image of the new Testament which Jesus had sealed with his sufferings, the commemoration of the sacrifice of the Christ until his coming.†

At a very early day this mystery was fixed in a brief story of the sacrament, which we possess under four quite similar forms.‡ John, so prepossessed with eucharistic ideas,‖ who narrates the last supper with so much prolixity, who attaches to it so many circumstances and so much discourse;§ John, who alone among the evangelical narrators, has here the credibility of an eye witness, knows nothing of this story. This is proof that he did not regard the institution of

* Luke, xxii, 20. † I Cor., xi, 26.
‡ Matt., xxvi, 26-28; Mark, xiv. 22-24; Luke, xxii, 19-21; I Cor., xi 23-25.
‖ Ch. vi. § Ch. xiii-xvii.

the Eucharist as a peculiarity of the Last Supper. To him, the rite of the Last Supper is the washing of feet. It is probable that in certain primitive Christian families, this latter rite obtained an importance which it subsequently lost.* Undoubtedly Jesus, under certain circumstances, had practised it in order to give his disciples a lesson of humility. It was referred to the eve of his death, in consequence of the tendency to group around the Last Supper all the grand moral and ritual commands of Jesus.

A lofty sentiment of love, concord, charity and mutual deference animated, moreover, the memories which they thought to preserve of the last hours of Jesus.† The unity of his Church it is, constituted by himself or by his spirit, which is always the soul of the symbols and the discourses that Christian tradition refers to this sacred hour: "A new commandment I give unto you, said he, that ye love one another as I have loved you. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I call you my friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you. This I command you that ye love one another."‡ At this last hour, there were still some rivalries, some struggles for precedence.‖ Jesus remarked that if he, the master, had been among his disciples as their servant, how much the more ought

* John, XIII, 14-15 Cf. Matt., XX, 26 seqq.; Luke, XXII, 26 seqq.

† John, XIII, 1 seqq. The discourses placed by John in connection with the narrative of the Supper cannot be taken as historical. They are full of phrases and expressions which are not in the style of the discourses of Jesus, and which, on the contrary, enter largely into the habitual language of John. Thus the expression "little children" in the vocative (John, XIII, 33) is very frequent in the first Epistle of John. It does not appear to have been familiar to Jesus.

‡ John, XII, 33-35; XV, 12-17. ‖ Luke, XXII, 24-27. Cf. John, XIII, 4 seqq

they to submit themselves one to another. According to some, while drinking the wine, he said: "I will not drink henceforth of the fruit of the vine until I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom."* According to others, he promised them very soon a heavenly feast at which they should be seated upon thrones by his side.†

It seems that towards the end of the evening the presentiments of Jesus took possession of his disciples. All felt that a serious danger menaced the master and that a crisis was at hand. For a moment Jesus thought of taking precautions and spoke of swords. There were two in the company. "It is enough," said he.‡ He did not follow up that idea; he saw plainly that timid provincials would not hold out before the armed force of the great powers of Jerusalem. Cephas, full of courage and feeling sure of himself, swore that he would go with him to prison or to death. Jesus, with his usual penetration, expressed some doubts. According to one tradition, which came probably from Peter himself, Jesus referred him to the crowing of the cock.‖ All, like Cephas, swore that they would not deny him.

* Matt., xxvi, 29; Mark, xiv, 25; Luke, xxii, 18.
† Luke, xxii, 29-30.
‡ Luke, xxii, 36-38.
‖ Matt., xxvi, 31 seqq.; Mark, xiv, 29 seqq.; Luke, xxii, 33 seqq.; John, xiii 36 seqq.

CHAPTER XXIV.

ARREST AND TRIAL OF JESUS.

NIGHT had completely fallen* when they left the room.† Jesus, according to his habit, crossed the valley of the Cedron, and repaired accompanied by his disciples, to the garden of Gethsemane, at the foot of the mount of Olives.‡ Predominating over his friends by his immense superiority, he watched and prayed. They were sleeping beside him, when suddenly a band of men presented themselves by the light of their torches. They were sergeants of the temple, armed with clubs, a species of police which had been left to the priests; they were supported by a detachment of Roman soldiers with their swords; the order of arrest emanated from the high-priest and the Sanhedrin.‖ Judas, knowing the habits of Jesus, had indicated this place as that in which they might most easily surprise him. Judas, according to the unanimous tradition of the primitive times, himself accompanied the squad§,

* John, XIII, 30.

† The circumstance of a hymn related by Matt., XXVI, 30, and Mark, XIV, 26 comes from the opinion held by these two Evangelists that the last Supper of Jesus was the paschal feast. Before and after the paschal feast, psalms are sung Talm. of Bab., *Pesachim*, cap. IX, 5 hal. 3 et fol. 118 *a*, etc.

‡ Matt., XXVI, 36; Mark, XIV, 32; Luke, XXII, 39; John XVIII, 1-2.

‖ Matt., XXVI, 47; Mark, XIV, 43; John, XVIII, 3, 12.

§ Matt., XXVI, 47; Mark, XIV, 43; Luke, XXII, 47; John, XVIII, 3; *Acts*, I, 16.

and even, according to some,* was so detestable as to make a kiss the sign of his treachery. However this may be, it is certain that the disciples made a beginning of resistance.‡ One of them (Peter, according to the eye witnesses†) drew his sword and wounded one of the servants of the high-priest named Malek in the ear. Jesus checked this first impulse. He gave himself up to the soldiers. Weak and incapable of acting with success, especially against authorities which had so great prestige, the disciples took to flight and dispersed. Peter and John kept within sight of their master. Another unknown young man followed him, dressed in a thin garment. An attempt was made to arrest him; but the young man fled, leaving his tunic in the hands of the officers.‖

The course which the priests had resolved to follow against Jesus, was strictly conformable to the established law. The procedure against the "seducer" (*mésith*), who seeks to sully the purity of the faith, is laid down in the Talmud with details the shameless simplicity of which causes a smile. In it judicial ambuscade is constituted an essential portion of the criminal process. When a man is accused of "seduction," two witnesses are concealed behind a partition; and it is arranged to bring the accused into an adjoining room, in which he can be heard by the two witnesses without himself perceiving them. Two candles are lighted near him, that it may be fully established that the witnesses "see him."§ Then he is made to repeat his blasphemy. He is urged to retract.—

* This is the tradition of the synoptics. In the narrative of John, Jesus announces himself.

† The two traditions accord upon this point.

‡ John, xviii 10.

‖ Mark, xiv, 51-52.

§ In criminal matters, only eye-witnesses were admitted. Mischna *Sanhedrin*, iv, 5.

If he persists, the witnesses who have heard him, bring him to the tribunal, and he is stoned. The Talmud adds that this course was adopted in the proceeding against Jesus, that he was condemned upon the testimony of two witnesses who had been concealed, that 'seduction" is, moreover, the only crime for which witnesses are thus prepared.*

The disciples of Jesus apprise us, indeed, that the crime charged against their master was "seduction,"† and, with the exception of certain minutiæ, the fruit of the rabbinical imagination, the narrative of the evangelists corresponds word for word to the proceeding described by the Talmud. The plan of the enemies of Jesus was to convict him, by examination of witnesses and by his own confessions, of blasphemy and of an outrage upon the Mosaic religion, to condemn him to death according to the law, and then to make Pilate approve the sentence. The sacerdotal authority, as we have already seen, resided in fact entirely in the hands of Hanan. The order of arrest came probably from him. To the house of this powerful personage Jesus was first taken.‡ Hanan questioned him as to his doctrines and his disciples. Jesus refused with a just pride to enter into long explanations. He referred them to his teaching, which had been public; he declared that he had never had any secret doctrine; he invited the ex-high-priest to question those who had heard him. This response was perfectly natural; but the exaggerated respect with which the

* Talm. of Jerus., *Sanhedrin*, xiv, 16; Talm. of Bab., same treatise, 43 *a*, 67 *a*. Cf. *Schabbath*, 104 *b*.

† Matt., xxviii, 63; John, vii, 12, 47.

‡ John, xviii, 13 seqq. This circumstance, which is found only in John, is the strongest proof of the historic value of the fourth Gospel.

aged pontiff was surrounded made it seem audacious; one of the bystanders replied, it is said with a cuff.

Peter and John had followed their master to Hanan's house. John, who was known in the house, was admitted without difficulty; but Peter was stopped at the entrance, and John was obliged to beg the portress to let him pass. The night was cold. Peter remained in the antechamber, and approached a brazier about which the servants were warming themselves. He was quickly recognized as a disciple of the accused. The wretched man, betrayed by his Galilean accent, pressed with questions by the servants, one of whom was a relative of Malek and had seen him in Gethsemane, denied three times that he had ever had the least connection with Jesus. He thought that Jesus could not hear him, and did not realize that this cowardly dissimulation was utterly unscrupulous. But his better nature quickly revealed to him the fault which he had committed. A fortuitous circumstance, the crowing of the cock, recalled to him the words which Jesus had spoken. Pricked to the heart, he went out and wept bitterly.*

Hanan, although the real author of the judicial murder which was to be committed, had no power to pronounce sentence on Jesus; he sent him to his son-in-law Caiaphas, who wore the official title. This man, the blind instrument of his father-in-law, ratified all as a matter of course. The Sanhedrin was assembled at his house.† The examination commenced; several witnesses, prepared in advance according to the inquisitorial process set forth in the Talmud, appeared be-

* Matt., xxvi, 69 seqq.; Mark, xiv, 66 seqq.; Luke, xxii, 54 seqq.; John, xviii, 15 seqq.; 25 seqq. † Matt, xvi, 57; Mark, xiv, 53; Luke, xxii, 66.

fore the tribunal. The fatal words which Jesus had really pronounced: "I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to build it in three days," were cited by two witnesses. To blaspheme the temple of God was, according to the Jewish law, to blaspheme God himself.* Jesus preserved silence and refused to explain the incriminated words. According to one narrative, the high priest then adjured him to say whether he was the Messiah. Jesus confessed it and proclaimed before the assembly the speedy coming of his heavenly kingdom.† The courage of Jesus determined upon death, does not call for this. It is most probable that here, as at Hanan's house, he held his peace. This was in general during these last hours his rule of conduct. The sentence was drawn up. Pretexts only were sought. Jesus knew it, and did not undertake a useless defense. From the stand-point of orthodox Judaism he was indeed a blasphemer, a destroyer of the established worship; now these crimes were punished with death by the law.‡ With one voice the assembly declared him guilty of capital crime. The members of the council who were secretly favorable to him were absent or did not vote.‖ The frivolity common to long established aristocracies prevented the judges from reflecting at length upon the consequences of the sentence which they gave. Human life was then sacrificed very lightly; undoubtedly the members of the Sanhedrin did not dream that their children were to render account to an angry posterity for the sentence pronounced with such careless contempt.

* Matt., xxiii, 16 seqq.
† Matt., xxvi, 64; Mark, xiv, 62; Luke, xxii, 69. John knows nothing of this scene. ‡ *Levit.*, xxiv, 14 seqq.; *Deut.*, xiii, 1 seqq. ‖ Luke, xxiii, 50-51.

The Sanhedrin had no right to execute a sentence of death.* But, in the confusion of powers then reigning in Judea, Jesus was none the less, from that hour, a condemned man. He remained during the rest of the night exposed to the ill treatment of a base varletry, who spared him no affront.†

In the morning, the chief priests and the elders assembled anew.‡ The question was, how to make Pilate ratify the sentence pronounced by the Sanhedrin, which, since the occupation of the Romans, was insufficient. The procurator was not invested like the imperial legate with the power of life and death. But Jesus was not a Roman citizen; the authorization of the governor sufficed to allow the sentence pronounced against him to take its course. As always happens when a political people subject a nation in which the civil and religious law are one, the Romans had been led to give a sort of official support to the Jewish law. The Roman law did not apply to the Jews. They remained under the canonical law which we find in the Talmud, in the same manner as the Algerian Arabs are yet ruled by the code of Islam. Although neutrals in religion, the Romans thus sanctioned very often penalties for religious offenses. The situation was almost that of the holy cities of India under the English rule, or still more like what the condition of Damascus would be on the morning after the conquest of Syria by a European nation. Josephus claimed, (but it is indeed doubtful,) that if a Roman passed beyond the columns which bore inscriptions

* John, xviii, 31; Jos., *Ant.*, XX, ix, 1.
† Matt., xxvi, 67-68; Mark, xiv, 65; Luke, xxii, 63-65.
‡ Matt., xxvii, 1; Mark, xv, 1; Luke, xxii, 66; xxiii, 1; John, xviii, 28.

forbidding pagans to go farther, the Romans themselves delivered him to the Jews to be put to death.*

The officers of the priests, therefore, bound Jesus and led him to the prætorium, which was the former palace of Herod,† adjoining the Antonia tower.‡ It was the morning of the day when they were to eat the paschal lamb, (Friday, the 14th of Nisan, April 3rd.) The Jews by entering the prætorium would be defiled, and rendered unable to participate in the sacred feast. They remained without.‖ Pilate, advised of their presence, mounted the *bima*,§ or tribunal situated in the open air,¶ at the spot called *Gabbathá*, or in Greek *Lithostrotos*, because of the tesselated pavement which covered the ground. Hardly was he informed of the accusation before he expressed his displeasure at being concerned in the matter.** Then he shut himself up in the prætorium with Jesus. There took place a conversation the precise details of which have escaped us, no witness being able to report it to the disciples, but the purport of which appears to have been well divined by John. His narrative indeed is in perfect accord with what history informs us of the reciprocal situation of the two interlocutors.

The procurator Pontius, surnamed Pilatus, doubtless from the *pilum* or javelin of honor with which he himself or one of his ancestors had been decorated,††

* Jos.; *Ant*, XV, xi, 5; *B. J.*, VI, ii, 4.
† Philo, *Legatio ad Caium*, § 38. Jos *B. J.*, II, xiv. 8.
‡ On the spot where now is the seraglio of the Pasha of Jerusalem.
‖ John, xviii, 28.
§ The Greek word βῆμα had passed into Syro-Chaldaic.
¶ Jos., *B. J.*, II, ix, 3; xiv, 8; Matt., xxvii, 27; John, xviii, 33.
** John, xviii. 29.
†† Virg., *Æn.*, XII, 121; Martial, *Epigr.*, I, xxxiii; X, xlvii; Plutarch, *Life of Romulus*, 29 Compare the *hasta pura*, military decoration, Orelli and Henzen,

had not had hitherto any relation with the infant sect. Indifferent to the internal quarrels of the Jews, he saw in all these movements of sectaries nothing more than the effects of intemperate imaginations or of disordered wits. In general, he did not love the Jews. But the Jews detested him still more; they thought him severe, contemptuous and passionate; they accused him of improbable crimes.* The center of a great popular fermentation, Jerusalem was a very seditious city, and to a stranger an unendurable place of residence. The zealots imputed to the new procurator a fixed design to abolish the Jewish law.† Their narrow fanaticism, their religious hatreds were revolting to this broad idea of justice and civil government, which the humblest Roman citizen carried with him everywhere. All the acts of Pilate which are known to us show him as a good administrator.‡ In the first days of his rule he had had difficulties with those under his administration which he had settled in a very brutal manner, but in which it seems that he was substantially right. The Jews must have appeared to him a very backward race; he judged them undoubtedly as a liberal prefect formerly judged the Bas-Bretons, revolting for a new road, or for the establishment of a school. In his best projects for the good of the country, notably in all that pertained to public works, he had encountered the Law as an insuperable obstacle. The Law restricted life to such an extent that it opposed all change and all amelioration. Roman constructions, even those most useful, were to

Inscr. lat., Nos. 3,574, 6,852, etc. *Pilatus* is, in this hypothesis, a word of the same form as *Torquatus*.

* Philo, *Leg. ad Caium*, § 38.

† Jos., *Ant.*, XVIII, III, 1, init.

‡ Jos., *Ant.*, XVIII, II–IV

the zealous Jews an object of great antipathy.* Two votive shields, with inscriptions, which he had caused to be placed opposite his residence, near the sacred enclosure, provoked a yet more violent storm.† Pilate at first paid little attention to these susceptibilities; he became thus engaged in repressing bloody outbreaks,‡ which led to his removal.‖ The experience of so many conflicts had rendered him very prudent in his dealings with an intractable people, who avenged themselves on their masters by compelling them to use against them execrable severities. With extreme displeasure the procurator saw himself led in this new matter to act a cruel part for a law which he hated.§ He knew that religious fanaticism, when it has obtained from civil governments some deed of violence, is straightway the first to throw upon them the responsibility, and almost to accuse them of it. Supreme injustice; for the real criminal, in such a case, is the instigator!

Pilate would, therefore, have preferred to save Jesus. Perhaps the calm and dignified attitude of the accused made some impression upon him. According to one tradition,¶ Jesus found a support in the wife of the procurator herself. She might have seen the gentle Galilean from some window of the palace, looking upon the courts of the temple. Perhaps she saw him again in a dream, and the blood of this beautiful young man, which was about to be shed, gave her the nightmare. So much is certain, that Jesus found Pilate predisposed in his favor. The governor questioned

* Talm. of Bab., *Schabbath*, 33 *b*.
† Philo, *Leg. ad Caium*, § 38
‡ Jos., *Ant.*, XVIII, III, 1 and 2; *Bell. Jud.*, II, IX, 2 seqq.; Luke, XIII, 1.
‖ Jos., *Ant.*, XVIII, IV, 1-2.
§ John, XVIII, 31.
¶ Matt., XXVII, 19.

him with kindness, and with the intention of seeking all means to set him free.

The title of "King of the Jews," which Jesus had never given himself, but which his enemies presented as the sum of his acts and pretentions, was naturally that by which they could excite the umbrage of the Roman authority. It was on this charge, as seditious and guilty of crime against the State, that they undertook to accuse him. Nothing was more unjust; for Jesus had always recognized the Roman empire as the established power. But conservative religious parties are not accustomed to recoil at the utterance of calumny. They deduced in spite of him all the consequences of his doctrine; they transformed him into a disciple of Juda the Gaulonite; they feigned that he opposed the payment of tribute to Cæsar.* Pilate asked him if he were really the king of the Jews.† Jesus dissembled nothing of his thought. But the great ambiguity which had created his power, and which after his death was to constitute his royalty, did not avail him now. An idealist, that is, making no distinction between spirit and matter, his mouth armed with his two-edged sword, according to the image of the Apocalypse, Jesus never completely reassured the powers of the earth. If we may believe John, he avowed his royalty, but pronounced at the same time this profound sentence: "My kingdom is not of this world." Then he explained the nature of his royalty, all being summed up in the possession and proclamation of the truth. Pilate comprehended nothing of this superior idealism.‡ Jesus appeared to him doubtless an inof-

* Luke, xxiii, 2, 5.
† Matt., xxvii, 11; Mark, xv, 2; Luke, xxiii, 3; John, xviii, 33.
‡ John, xviii, 38

fensive dreamer. The total lack of religious and philosophical proselytism among the Romans of tha epoch made them look upon devotion to truth as a chimera. These discussions wearied them, and appeared to them devoid of sense. Not seeing how dangerous to the empire was the leaven concealed in these new speculations, they had no reason to employ violence against them. All their displeasure fell upon those who came to ask them to administer punishments for empty subtleties. Twenty years later Gallio still followed the same line of conduct with the Jews.* Until the destruction of Jerusalem, the administrative rule of the Romans was to remain completely indifferent to these quarrels of sectaries.†

One expedient suggested itself to the mind of the governor to reconcile his own feelings with the demands of the fanatical people whose pressure he had already so many times experienced. It was the custom at the feast of the Passover to deliver to the people a prisoner. Pilate, knowing that Jesus had been arrested only in consequence of the jealousy of the priests,‡ endeavored to give him the benefit of this custom. He appeared anew upon the *bima*, and proposed to the multitude to release "the king of the Jews." The proposition made in these terms had a certain character of liberality, and, at the same time, of irony. The priests saw its danger. They acted promptly,‖ and to defeat the proposition of Pilate, they

* *Acts*, XVIII 14–15.

† Tacitus (*Ann.*, XV, 44) presents the death of Jesus as a political execution by Pontius Pilate. But, at the time when Tacitus wrote, the Roman policy towards the Christians had changed; they were considered guilty of conspiracy against the State. It was natural that the Latin historian should believe that Pilate, in executing Jesus, had acted from considerations of public security. Josephus is much more exact (*Ant.*, XVIII, III, 3).

‡ Mark, XV, 10.

‖ Matt., XXVII, 20; Mark, XV, 11.

suggested to the multitude the name of a prisoner who enjoyed great popularity in Jerusalem. By a singular chance, he also was called Jesus,* and bore the surname of Bar-Abba or Bar-Rabban.† This was a personage well known ;‡ he had been arrested for a riot accompanied with murder.‖ A general clamor arose: 'Not this one; but Jesus Bar-Rabban." Pilate was obliged to give up Jesus Bar-Rabban.

His embarrassment increased. He feared lest too much indulgence for a prisoner to whom was given the title of "king of the Jews," should compromise him. Fanaticism, moreover, leads all powers to treat with it. Pilate thought himself obliged to make some concession; but still hesitating at bloodshed to satisfy people whom he detested, he endeavored to give the matter a ridiculous turn. Professing to laugh at the pompous title given to Jesus, he caused him to be whipped.§ Flaggellation was the ordinary preliminary of crucifixion.¶ Perhaps Pilate wished to lead them to believe that that sentence was already pronounced, while yet hoping that the preliminary punishment would suffice. Then followed, according to all the narratives, a revolting scene. Soldiers put upon his body a red gown, a crown woven of thorn branches upon his head, and a reed in his hand. Thus covered, he was led out upon the *bima*, before the people. The soldiers defiled in front of him, slapped him in the face each in turn, and, kneeling, said: "Hail, king of the Jews!"** Others, it is said, spit

* The name of Jesus has disappeared in most of the manuscripts. This reading has, nevertheless, very strong authority.

† Matt., XXVII, 16 ‡ Cf St. Jerome, in Matt., XXVII, 16.

‖ Mark, XV, 7; Luke, XXIII, 19. John (XVIII, 40), who makes him a robber, appears here much less accurate than Mark.

§ Matt., XXVII, 26; Mark, XV, 15; John, XIX, 1.

¶ Jos., *B. J.*, II, XIV, 9; V, XI, 1; VII, VI, 4; Livy, XXXIII, 36; Quintus Curtius, VII, XI, 28.

** Matt., XXVII, 27 seqq.; Mark XV, 16 seqq.; Luke, XXIII, 11; John, XIX, 2 seqq

upon him and struck him upon the head with the reed. It is difficult to understand how Roman gravity should have lent itself to acts so shameful. It is true that Pilate, in his capacity of procurator, had scarcely any but auxiliary troops under his orders.* Roman citizens, like the legionaries, would not have descended to such indignities.

Did Pilate think by this parade to cover up his responsibility? Did he hope to turn aside the blow which menaced Jesus by according something to the hatred of the Jews,† and by substituting for the tragic termination a grotesque ending, from which it would seem to result that the matter merited no other issue? If such were his idea, he had no success. The tumult increased, and became a real sedition. Cries of "Let him be crucified! let him be crucified!" resounded on all sides. The priests, assuming a more and more exacting tone, declared the Law in peril, if the seducer were not punished with death.‡ Pilate saw clearly that, to save Jesus, it would be necessary to quell a bloody riot. Nevertheless, he still endeavored to gain time. He entered the prætorium again, and informed himself of what country Jesus was, seeking some pretext for denying his jurisdiction.‖ According to one tradition, he even sent Jesus to Antipater, who, it is said, was then at Jerusalem.§ Jesus

* See *Inscript. rom. de L'Algerie*, No. 5, fragm. B.
† Luke, XXII, 16, 22 ‡ John, XIX, 7.
‖ John, XIX, 9. Cf. Luke, XXIII, 6 seqq.
§ It is probable that this is a first attempt at a "Harmony of the Gospels." Luke must have had before his eyes a narrative in which the death of Jesus was erroneously attributed to Herod. In order not to sacrifice that version entirely, he put the two traditions one after the other, the more as he perhaps knew vaguely, that Jesus (as John informs us) appeared before three authorities. In many other cases, Luke seems to have some distant notion of the facts which are peculiar to John's narration. Moreover, the third gospel contains in regard to the history of the crucifixion, a series of additions which the author appears to have borrowed from a more recent document, in which an arrangement, with a view to edification was perceptible.

lent himself little to these kindly efforts; he preserved, as at the house of Caiaphas, a grave and dignified silence, which astonished Pilate. The cries without became more and more threatening. They already denounced the lack of zeal of the functionary who favored an enemy of Cæsar. The greatest adversaries of the Roman domination were transformed into loyal subjects of Tiberius, in order to gain the right to accuse the too tolerant procurator of high treason. "There is no king here," said they, "but the emperor; whosoever makes himself king, puts himself in opposition with the emperor. If the governor acquits the man, he is not the emperor's friend."* The feeble Pilate faltered; he read in advance the report that his enemies would send to Rome, in which they would accuse him of having sustained a rival of Tiberius. Already, in the affair of the votive shields,† the Jews had written to the emperor, and had been sustained. He feared for his position. By a condescension which was to deliver his name to the scourges of history, he yielded, casting, it is said, upon the Jews all responsibility for what should follow. The latter, according to the Christians, accepted it fully, crying: "His blood be on us and on our children!"‡

Were these words really pronounced? We may doubt it. But they are the expression of a deep historical truth. Considering the position which the Romans had assumed in Judea, Pilate could hardly have done other than he did. How many sentences of death, dictated by religious intolerance, have forced the hand of the civil power! The king of Spain who,

* John, XIX 12, 15. Cf. Luke, XXIII, 2. To appreciate the exactitude of the coloring of this scene in the Evangelists, see Philo, *Leg. ad Caium*, § 38.
† See above, p. 335. ‡ Matt., XXVII, 24-25.

to please a fanatical clergy, gave up to the stake hundreds of his subjects, was more blameable than Pilate; for he represented a more complete power than was yet established at Jerusalem by the Romans. When the civil power becomes a persecutor or an intermeddler, at the solicitation of the priest, it proves its weakness. But let that government which in this regard is without sin, cast the first stone at Pilate. The "secular arm," behind which clerical cruelty shelters itself, is not the criminal. None can say that he has a horror of blood, when he causes it to be shed by his servants.

It was, therefore, neither Tiberius nor Pilate who condemned Jesus. It was the old Jewish party; it was the Mosaic law. According to our modern ideas, there is no transmission of moral demerit from father to son; each must account to human as well as to divine justice only for what he himself has done. Every Jew, consequently, who in our day still suffers for the murder of Jesus, has a right to complain; for perhaps he would have been a Simon the Cyrenean; perhaps at least he had not been with those who cried: "Crucify him!" But nations have their responsibility as well as individuals. Now, if ever crime was the crime of a nation, it was the execution of Jesus. This execution was "legal," in the sense that its first cause was a law which was the very soul of the nation. The Mosaic law, in its modern form, it is true, but yet its accepted form, pronounced the sentence of death against every attempt to change the established worship. Now Jesus, without any doubt, attacked this worship, and aspired to destroy it. The Jews said to Pilate, with simple and true frankness: "We have a Law, and by

our Law he ought to die; because he made himself the Son of God."* The law was detestable; but it was the law of an ancient ferocity, and the hero who offered himself to abrogate it must first of all suffer it.

Alas, that more than eighteen hundred years must pass away before the blood which he is now to shed shall bear its fruits! In his name, for centuries, the tortures of death shall be inflicted upon thinkers as noble as he. To-day even, in countries which call themselves Christian, penalties are imposed for religious delinquencies. Jesus is not responsible for these mutations. He could not foresee that any people, with disordered imagination, would one day conceive him a frightful Moloch, greedy for burning flesh. Christianity has been intolerant; but intolerance is not a trait essentially Christian. It is a Jewish trait, in this sense that Judaism built up for the first time the theory of the absolute into a religion, and established the principle that every innovator, even when he brings miracles to the support of his doctrine, ought to be received with blows, and be stoned by the whole world, without a hearing.† Certainly, the pagan world had also its religious violence. But if it had had that law, how would it have become Christian? The Pentateuch was thus the first code of religious terror in the world. Judaism has given the example of an immutable dogma, armed with the sword. If, instead of pursuing the Jews with a blind hatred, Christianity had abolished the regim which slew its founder, how much more consistent would it have been, how much better it would have deserved of mankind!

* John, xix, 7. † *Deut.*, xiii, 1 seqq.

CHAPTER XXV.

THE DEATH OF JESUS.

Although the real motive of the execution of Jesus was wholly religious, his enemies had succeeded, at the prætorium, in presenting him as guilty of treason; they would not have obtained from the skeptical Pilate a condemnation for cause of heterodoxy. Following out this idea, the priests, through the multitude, demanded the execution of Jesus by the cross. Crucifixion was not of Jewish origin; had the condemnation of Jesus been purely Mosaic, he would have been stoned. The cross was a Roman punishment, reserved for slaves and those cases in which it was desired to add to death the aggravation of ignominy. In applying it to Jesus, he was treated like highway-robbers brigands, bandits, or those enemies of an inferior class to whom the Romans did not accord the honor of death by the sword.* It was the chimerical "king of the Jews," not the heterodox dogmatist, who wa punished. In consequence of the same idea, the execution was of necessity abandoned to the Romans. We

* Jos., *Ant.*, XX, IX. 1. The Talmud, which represents the condemnation of Jesus as wholly religious, declares, indeed, that he was stoned, or at least that, after having been suspended, he was stoned, as often happened (Mischna, *Sanhedrin*, VI, 4; Talm. of Jerus., *Sanhedrin*, XIV, 16; Talm. of Bab., same treatise 43 *a*, 67 *a*

know that, among the Romans, soldiers, slaughter being their occupation, performed the office of executioners. Jesus was therefore delivered to a cohort of auxiliary troops, and all the horror of the tortures introduced by the cruel customs of the new conquerors was unfolded before him. It was about noon.* He was dressed in his clothes which they had taken off to parade him before the people, and as the cohort had already in reserve two thieves to be executed, they put the three prisoners together, and the cortege took up its march for the place of execution.

This place was a spot called Golgotha, situated outside of Jerusalem, but near the walls of the city † The name *Golgotha* signifies skull; it corresponds, it seems, to our word *Chaumont* [Baldmount] and probably designates a smooth hill, having the form of a bald skull. We know not with exactitude the situation of this hill. It was surely to the north or north-west of the city, in the high rolling plain which is bounded by the walls and the two valleys of Cedron and Hinnom,‡ a miserable region, made still more melancholy by the disagreeable incidents of its proximity to a great city. It is difficult to place Golgotha on the precise spot where, since Constantine, all Christendom has revered it.‖ This spot is too near the interior of the city,

* John, xix, 14. According to Mark, xv, 25, it could hardly have been after 8 o'clock in the morning, since, according to that Evangelist, Jesus was crucified at nine o'clock.

† Matt., xxvii, 33; Mark, xv, 22; John, xix, 20; Heb., xiii, 12.

‡ Golgotha, indeed, seems to have some relation to the hill of *Gareb* and the locality of *Goath*, mentioned in Jeremiah, xxxi, 39. Now, these two places appear to have been to the northwest of the city. I should incline to place the spot where Jesus was crucified near to the extreme angle which the existing wall makes towards the west, or, perhaps, on the mounds which overlook the valley of Hinnom, above *Birket-Mamilla*.

‖ The proofs by which it has been attempted to show that the Holy Sepulchre has been displaced since Constantine, lack force.

and we are inclined to believe that in the time of Jesus it was comprised within the circuit of the walls.*

He who was condemned to crucifixion had himself to bear the instrument of his torture.† But Jesus, weaker than his two companions, could not bear his. The squad met a certain Simon of Cyrene, who was returning from the country, and the soldiers, with the rough procedure of a foreign garrison, forced him to bear the fatal tree. Perhaps they exercised in this a recognized right of impressment, Romans not being able to cumber themselves with the infamous wood. It seems that afterwards Simon belonged to the Christian community. His two sons, Alexander and Rufus,‡ were well known in it. He related perhaps more than one circumstance which he had witnessed. No disciple was at this time near Jesus.‖

* M. de Vogue has discovered, 84 yards east of the traditional site of Calvary, a piece of Judaic wall analogous to that of Hebron, which, if it belongs to the inclosure of the time of Jesus, would leave this traditional site outside of the city. The existence of a sepulchral cave (that which is called the "Tomb of Joseph of Arimathea") under the wall of the cupola of the Holy Sepulchre would lead also to the supposition that this place was without the walls. Two historical considerations, one of which is strong, can, moreover, be invoked in favor of the tradition. The first is, that it would have been singular that those who, under Constantine, sought to fix the evangelical topography, should not have been stopped by the objection which results from *John*, XIX, 20, and *Heb.*, XIII, 12. How, if free in their choice, could they have wantonly exposed themselves to so grave a difficulty? The second consideration is, that they had, to guide them, in the time of Constantine, the ruins of an edifice, the temple of Venus upon Golgotha, built by Hadrian. We are therefore at times forced to believe that the work of the topographical devotees of the time of Constantine was serious, that they sought indications, and that, although they did not reject certain pious frauds, they were guided by analogies. Had they followed a vain caprice only, they would have placed Golgotha at a more commanding spot, at the summit of some one of the mounds near Jerusalem, in order to satisfy the Christian imagination, which at an early day insisted that the death of Christ took place upon a mountain. But the difficulty of enclosures is grave. Add that the erection of the temple of Venus upon Golgotha proves very little. Eusebius (*Vita Const.*, III, 26), Socrates (*H. E.*, I, 17), Sozomen (*H. E.*, II, 1), and St. Jerome (*Epist.*, XLIX, ad Paulin.), say indeed that there was a sanctuary of Venus upon the site which they believed to be that of the holy sepulchre; but it is not certain: first, that Hadrian built it; second, that he built it upon a spot which was called in his time "Golgotha;" third, that he had the intention of building it at the place where Jesus suffered death.

† Plutarch, *De sera num. vind.*, 19; Artemidorus, *Onirocrit.*, II, 56.

‡ Mark, XV, 21.

‖ The circumstance, *Luke*, XXIII, 27–31, is one of those in which we perceive the work of a pious and tender imagination. The words which are here attributed to Jesus could have been written only after the siege of Jerusalem.

They finally reached the place of execution. According to Jewish usage, the victims were offered a highly spiced wine, an intoxicating drink, which from a sentiment of pity was given to the sufferer to stupify him.* It seems that the women of Jerusalem themselves often brought to the unfortunates who were led out to torture this wine of the dying; when none of them came it was bought at the expense of the public treasury.† Jesus, after having touched the cup to his lips, refused to drink.‡ This sad solace of common criminals was unsuited to his lofty nature. He preferred to go out of life with his mind perfectly unclouded, and to await with full consciousness the death which he had wished and invoked. He was then despoiled of his garments‖ and fastened to the cross. The cross was composed of two beams attached in the form of a T.§ It was quite low, so low that the feet of the victim almost touched the ground. The cross was first set up,¶ then the prisoner was fastened to it by driving nails through his hands; the feet were often nailed, sometimes merely tied with cords.** A billet of wood, a sort of arm, was fastened to the stem of the cross, towards the middle, and passed between the legs of the victim, who rested upon it.†† Without this the hands would have been torn and the body would have sunk down. At other times, a horizontal

* Talm. of Bab., *Sanhedrin*, fol. 43 *a*. Comp. *Prov.*, XXI, 6.
† Talm. of Bab., *Sanhedrin*, l. c.
‡ Mark, XV, 23. Matt., XXVII, 34, falsifies this circumstance, in order to obtain a messianic allusion to Ps., LXIX, 22.
‖ Matt., XXVII, 35, Mark, XV, 24; John, XIX, 23. Cf. Artemidorus, *Oniroer.*, II, 53.
§ Lucian. *Jud. voc.*, 12. Compare the grotesque crucifix drawn at Rome upon a wall of Mount Palatine, *Civiltà cattolica*, fasc. CLXI, p. 529 seqq.
¶ Jos., *B. J.*, VII, VI, 4; Cic., *In Verr.*, V, 66; Xenoph. Ephe., *Ephesiaca*, IV, 2
** Luke, XXIV, 39; John, XX, 25-27; Plantus, *Mostellaria*, II, I, 13 Lucan, *Phars.* VI, 543 seqq., 547; Justin, *Dial cum Tryph.*, 97; Tertullian, *Adv. Marcionem*, III, 19
†† Irenæus, *Adv. hær.*, II, 24, Justin, *Dial. cum Tryph.*, 91.

tablet was fixed at the hight of the feet and sustained them.*

Jesus tasted these horrors in all their atrocity. A burning thirst, one of the tortures of crucifixion,† devoured him. He asked for drink. There was at hand a cup of the ordinary drink of the Roman soldiers, a mixture of vinegar and water, called *posca*. Soldiers had to carry their *posca* with them in all their expeditions,‡ among which executions were counted. A soldier dipped a sponge in this drink, put it on the end of a reed, and bore it to the lips of Jesus, who sucked it.‖ The thieves were crucified on either side. The executioners, to whom were ordinarily abandoned the minor spoils (*pannicularia*) of criminals,§ drew lots for his garments, and, seated at the foot of the cross, guarded him.¶ According to one tradition, Jesus pronounced the words, which were in his heart if not upon his lips: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."**

An inscription, in accordance with the Roman custom, was attached to the top of the cross, bearing in three languages, Hebrew, Greek and Latin: THE KING OF THE JEWS. There was in this wording something humiliating and opprobrious to the nation. The numerous passers who read it were shocked by it. The priests sent word to Pilate that he ought to adopt a

* See the *graffito* previously cited.

† See the Arabic text published by Kosegarten, *Chrest. arab.* p. 64.

‡ Spartianus, Life of Hadrian. 10; Vulcatius Gallicanus, Life of Avidius Cassius, 5.

‖ Matt. XXVII, 48; Mark, XV, 36; Luke, XXIII, 36; John, XIX, 28-30.

§ Dig., XLVII, XX, *De bonis damnat.*, 6. Hadrian limited this usage.

¶ Matt., XXVII, 36. Cf. Petronius, Satyr., CXI, CXII.

** Luke. XXIII, 34. In general the last words attributed to Jesus, especially as Luke reports them, are doubtful. The intention of edification, or of showing the accomplishment of the prophecies, is there evident. In such cases, moreover, each understands in his own way. The last words of celebrated victims are always understood in two or three completely different ways, by the nearest witnesses.

wording which would imply only that Jesus had said that he was the king of the Jews. But Pilate, already disgusted with the case, refused to make any change in what was written.*

His disciples had fled. John nevertheless declares that he was present and remained all the while standing at the foot of the cross.† We can affirm with more certainty that the faithful women of Galilee, who had followed Jesus to Jerusalem, and continued to serve him, did not abandon him. Mary Cleophas, Mary Magdalene, Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Salome, and others besides, stood at a distance‡ and watched him.‖ If we may believe John,§ Mary, the mother of Jesus, was also at the foot of the cross, and Jesus, seeing his mother and his beloved disciple together, said to him: "Behold thy mother," and to her: "Behold thy son." But we cannot understand how the synoptic evangelists, who mention the other women by name, should have omitted her whose presence was so striking a fact. Perhaps indeed the extreme elevation of the character of Jesus does not render such a personal tenderness probable, at the moment when, en-

* John, xix, 19–22.

† John, xix, 25 seqq.

‡ The synoptics agree in placing the faithful group "far" from the cross. John says: "by" controlled by his desire to be brought very near to the cross of Jesus.

‖ Matt, xxvii, 55-56; Mark, xv, 40–41; Luke, xxiii, 49, 55; xxiv, 10; John, xix, 25. Cf. Luke, xxiii, 27–31.

§ John, xix, 25 seqq. Luke, always occupying middle ground between the two first synoptics and John, gives "all his acquaintance" as present, but at a distance (xxiii, 49). The expression γνωστοί may, it is true, refer to "relatives." Luke, however, (ii, 44), distinguishes the γνωστοί from the συγγενεῖς. We should add that the best manuscripts have οἱ γνωστοὶ αὐτῷ, and not οἱ γνωστοὶ αὐτοῦ. In the *Acts* (i, 14), Mary, the mother of Jesus, is also placed in company with the Galilean women. Luke, moreover (ii, 35), predicts that a sword of grief shall pierce her soul. But we can the less explain why he omits her at the cross.

tirely absorbed in his work, he no longer existed save for humanity.*

Aside from this little group of women, who from afar comforted his eyes, Jesus had before him only the spectacle of human debasement or stupidity. The passers insulted him. He heard about him vulgar raillery, and his death-cries of anguish turned into hateful mockeries. "Ah! behold him, said they, he who called himself Son of God! Let his father come now and deliver him, if he will have him." "He saved others," it was muttered, "himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him!" "Ah, said a third, thou that destroyest the temple and buildest it in three days, save thyself, and come down."† Some, partially aware of his apocalyptic ideas, thought they heard him call Elias, and said: "Let us see whether Elias will come to take him down." It appears that the two thieves crucified beside him also reviled him.‡ The sky was dark;‖ the earth, as in all the environs of Jerusalem, dry and melancholy. For a moment, according to some accounts, his heart failed him; a cloud concealed the face of his Father; he endured an agony of despair, a thousand times more excruciating than all his tortures. He saw nothing but the ingratitude of man;

This is, in my judgment, one of those relations in which the personality of John, and his desire to give himself importance, betrays itself. John, after the death of Jesus, appears in fact to have received the mother of Jesus, and to have adopted her (John, xix, 27). The great consideration which Mary enjoyed in the infant church, caused him doubtless to declare that Jesus, whose favorite disciple he desired to be considered, had, at death, commended to him that which he held most dear. The presence of this precious charge assured him a sort of precedence over the other apostles, and gave high authority to his teaching.

† Matt., xxvii, 40 seqq.; Mark, xv, 29 seqq.

‡ Matt., xxvii, 44; Mark, xv, 32. Luke, following his desire for the conversion of sinners, has here modified the tradition.

‖ Matt., xxvii, 45; Mark, xv, 33; Luke, xxiii, 44.

perhaps he repented having suffered for a vile race, and he cried out: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" But his divine instinct resumed its sway. In proportion as the life of his body was extinguished, his soul became serene and gradually returned to its celestial source. He regained the consciousness of his mission; he saw in his death the salvation of the world; he lost sight of the hideous spectacle exhibited at his feet, and, thoroughly made one with his Father, he commenced upon the cross the divine life which he was to lead in the heart of humanity for infinite ages.

The peculiar atrocity of crucifixion was that a man might live three or four days in this horrible condition upon the seat of anguish.* The hemorrhage of the hands very soon ceased and was not mortal The true cause of death was the unnatural position of the body, which induced a hideous disturbance in the circulation, fearful pains in the head and heart, and finally rigidity of the limbs. Men of strong constitutions died only of hunger.† The principal idea of this cruel punishment was not to kill the criminal directly by absolute lesions, but to expose the slave, nailed by the hands of which he had not known how to make proper use, and let him rot upon the tree. The delicate organization of Jesus preserved him from this slow agony. Everything leads to the belief that the rupture of a blood-vessel produced at the end of three hours, immediate death. A few moments before he rendered up his soul, his voice was still strong.‡

* Petronius, *Sat.*, CXI seqq.; Origen, *In Matt. Comment. Series*, 140; the Arabic text published in Kosegerten, *op. cit.*, p. 63 seqq.

†Eusebius, *Hist. eccl.*, VIII, 8.

‡ Matt., xxvii, 46; Mark, xv, 34.

Suddenly he uttered a terrible cry,* in which some heard: "O, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit!" and which others, more attentive to the prophecies, rendered by these words: "All things are accomplished!" His head fell upon his breast, and he expired.

Repose now in thy glory, noble founder. Thy work is finished; thy divinity is established. Fear no more to see the edifice of thy labors fall by any fault. Henceforth, beyond the reach of frailty, thou shalt witness from the heights of divine peace, the infinite results of thy acts. At the price of a few hours of suffering, which did not even reach thy grand soul, thou hast bought the most complete immortality. For thousands of years, the world will depend on thee! Banner of our contests, thou shalt be the standard about which the hottest battle will be given. A thousand times more alive, a thousand times more beloved, since thy death than during thy passage here below, thou shalt become the corner-stone of humanity so entirely, that to tear thy name from this world would be to rend it to its foundations. Between thee and God, there will no longer be any distinction. Complete conqueror of death, take possession of thy kingdom, whither shall follow thee, by the royal road which thou hast traced, ages of worshippers.

* Matt., xxvii, 50; Mark, xv, 37; Luke, xxiii, 46; John, xix, 30.

CHAPTER XXVI.

JESUS AT THE TOMB

It was about three o'clock in the afternoon, according to our method of reckoning,* when Jesus expired. A Jewish law† prohibited leaving a dead body suspended on the cross beyond the evening of the day of execution. It is not probable that, in executions conducted by the Romans, this command was observed. But as the next day was the Sabbath, and a Sabbath of peculiar solemnity, the Jews expressed to the Roman authority‡ the desire that this holy day should not be polluted by such a spectacle.‖ Their request was acceded to; orders were given to hasten the death of the three prisoners, and to take them down from the cross. The soldiers executed this command by applying to the two thieves a second punishment, much more speedy than that of the cross, the *crurifragium*, the breaking of the legs,§ the ordinary punishment of slaves and prisoners of war. As to

* Matt., XXVII, 46; Mark, XV, 37; Luke, XXIII, 44. Comp. John, XIX, 14.

† *Deut.*, XXI, 22-23; Joshua, VIII, 29; X, 26 seqq. Cf. Jos., *B. J.*, IV, V, 2 Mischna, *Sanhedrin*, VI, 5.

‡ John says "to Pilate", but this cannot be, for Mark (XV, 44-45) has it that Pilate in the evening was yet ignorant of the death of Jesus.

‖ Compare Philo, *In Flaccum*, § 10.

§ There is no other example of the *crurifragium* applied after crucifixion. Bu

Jesus, they found him dead, and did not deem it necessary to break his legs. One of them, however, in order to remove all uncertainty of the actual death of the third victim, and to ascertain whether there still remained any spark of life, pierced his side with a lance. They thought that they saw blood and water flow out, which was regarded as a sign of the cessation of life.

John, who claims that he saw it,* dwells strongly upon this circumstance. It is evident clearly that doubts arose as to the reality of the death of Jesus. A few hours of suspension upon the cross seemed to persons accustomed to see executions altogether insufficient to produce such a result. Many cases were cited of crucified persons who, taken down in time, had been restored to life by energetic remedies.† Origen afterwards believed himself compelled to invoke the miraculous in order to explain so speedy an end.‡ The same astonishment is found in the narrative of Mark.‖ In reality, the best guarantee which the historian possesses upon a point of this nature, is the suspicious hatred of the enemies of Jesus. It is doubtful whether the Jews were thus early affected by the fear lest Jesus should be thought to be raised from the dead: but at all events they must have made certain that he was actually dead. Whatever may have been at certain periods the negligence of the ancients in all that pertains to legal verification and the strict conduct of affairs, we cannot believe that those who were in-

often, in order to abridge the tortures of the sufferer, they gave him a finishing stroke. See the passage of Ibn-Hischam, translated in the *Zeitschrift fur die Kunde des Morgenlandes*, I, p. 99-100.

* John, XIX, 31-35.

† Herodotus, VII, 194; Jos., *Vita*, 75.

‡ *In Matth. Comment. series*, 140.

‖ Mark, XV, 44-45.

terested did not take some precautions in this regard.*

According to the Roman custom, the body of Jesus should have remained suspended to become the prey of the birds.† According to the Jewish law, taken away at night, it should have been carried to the infamous spot set apart for the sepulture of criminals.‡ Had Jesus numbered among his disciples only his poor Galileans, timid and without credit, the latter rule would have been followed. But we have seen that in spite of his limited success at Jerusalem, Jesus had gained the sympathy of some persons of consideration, who were awaiting the kingdom of God, and who, without avowing themselves his disciples, felt a very deep attachment towards him. One of these persons, Joseph of the little village of Arimathea, (*Ha-ramathaim*)‖ went at evening and asked the body of the procurator.§ Joseph was a rich and honorable man, a member of the Sanhedrin. The Roman law at that time directed, moreover, that the dead body of the sufferer should be given to whomsoever claimed it.¶ Pilate, who was ignorant of the circumstance of the *crurifragium*, was astonished that Jesus should be dead so soon, and sent for the centurion who conducted the execution, to know what it meant. After having received the assurances of the centurion, Pilate accorded to Joseph the object of his request. The body, probably, had already been taken down from

* The necessities of the Christian argument afterwards led to the exaggeration of these precautions, especially when the Jews had adopted the theory that the body of Jesus had been stolen. Matt., XXVII, 62 seqq.; XXVIII, 11 15.

† Horace. *Epistles*, I, XVI, 48; Juvenal, XIV, 77; Lucan. VI, 544; Plautus, *Miles glor.*, II, IV, 19; Artemidorus, *Onir.*, II, 53; Pliny, XXXVI, 24; Plutarch, *Life of Cleomenes*, 39; Petronius, *Sat.*, CXI-CXII. ‡ Mischna, *Sanhedrin*, VI. 5.

‖ Probably identical with the ancient Rama of Samuel, in the tribe of Ephraim.

§ Matt., XXVII, 57 seqq.; Mark. XV, 42 seqq.; Luke. XXIII. 50 seqq.; John, XIX, 38 seqq. ¶ Digest, XLVIII, XXIV, *De cadaveribus punitorum.*

the cross. It was delivered to Joseph to be dealt with as he chose.

Another secret friend, Nicodemus,* whom we have already seen more than once using his influence in favor of Jesus, is now met again. He came bringing an ample store of the substances necessary for embalming. Joseph and Nicodemus buried Jesus according to the Jewish custom, that is, by enveloping him in a shroud with myrrh and aloes. The Galilean women were present,† and doubtless accompanied the scene with tears and piercing cries.

It was late, and all this was done in great haste. They had not yet chosen a final resting-place for the body. The removal would, moreover, have occupied them until a late hour, and necessitated a violation of the Sabbath; now the disciples still conscientiously observed the commands of the Jewish law. They decided therefore in favor of a temporary burial.‡ There was near by in a garden, a tomb recently cut in the rock, which had never been used. It belonged probably to some believer.‖ These sepulchres, when intended for a single body, were composed of a little chamber, in the rear of which the place for the body was indicated by a trough or couch scooped out in the wall and surmounted by an arch.§ As these caves

* John, XIX, 39 seqq. † Matt., XXVII, 61· Mark, XV, 47; Luke, XXIII, 55.

‡ John, XIX, 41-42.

‖ A tradition (Matt., XXVII, 60) designates Joseph of Arimathea as the owner of the vault.

§ The vault which, in the time of Constantine, was considered the tomb of Christ, has this form, as we may conclude from the description of Arculfe (in Mabillon, *Acta SS. Ord. S. Bened.*, sect. III, pars II, p. 504) and vague traditions which are still found at Jerusalem among the Greek clergy concerning the state of the rock now hidden by the edicule of the Holy Sepulchre. But the indices which were relied on in Constantine's time for the identification of this tomb with that of Christ were of little or no value (see especially Sozomen, *H. E.*, II, 1). Even should we admit the position of Golgotha as nearly exact, the Holy Sepulchre would still have no serious mark of authenticity. At all events, the aspect of the places has been totally changed.

were cut in the sides of inclined rocks, they were entered on a level with the ground; the entrance was closed by a stone very difficult to handle. Jesus was laid in the vault; the stone was rolled to the entrance, and they promised themselves to return and give him a more complete sepulture. But the morrow being a solemn Sabbath, the work was remitted to the third day.*

The women retired, after having carefully noticed how the body was laid. They employed the hours of the evening which remained in making additional preparations for embalming. On Saturday all rested.†

On Sunday morning, the women, Mary Magdalene first of all, came very early to the tomb.‡ The stone was rolled away from the opening, and the body was no longer in the place where they had laid it. At the same time, the strangest reports began to spread through the Christian community. The cry, "He is risen!" ran among the disciples like lightning. Love gave it everywhere facile credence. What had taken place? In treating of the history of the apostles it is that we shall have to examine this point, and seek the origin of the legends relating to the resurrection. The life of Jesus, to the historian, ends with his last sigh. But so deep was the trace which he had left in the hearts of his disciples and of a few devoted women, that, for weeks to come, he was to them living and consoling. Had his body been taken away,‖ or did enthusiasm, always credulous, afterwards generate the mass of accounts by which faith in the resurrection was sought to be established? This, for want of pe-

* Luke, xxiii, 56. † Luke, xxiii, 54-56.
‡ Matt. xxviii, 1; Mark. xvi, 1; Luke, xxiv, 1; John, xx, 1.
‖ See Matt., xxviii, 15; John, xx, 2.

remptory evidence, we shall never know. We may say, however, that the strong imagination of Mary Magdalene* here enacted a principal part.† Divine power of love! sacred moments in which the passion of a hallucinated woman gives to the world a resurrected God!

* She had been possessed of seven devils (Mark, xvi, 9; Luke. viii, 2).

† This is specially evident from Mark, xvi, 9 seqq. These verses form a conclusion of the second Gospel, different from the conclusion xvi, 1-8, after which many manuscripts stop. In the fourth Gospel (xx, 1-2. 11 seqq. 18) Mary Magdalene is also the sole primitive witness of the resurrection.

CHAPTER XXVII.

FATE OF THE ENEMIES OF JESUS.

According to the calculation which we adopt, the death of Jesus took place in the year 33 of our era.* It cannot in any event have been either before the year 29, the preaching of John and Jesus having commenced in the year 28,† nor after the year 35, for in the year 36, and, it seems, before the Passover, Pilate and Caiaphas both lost their offices.‡ The death of Jesus appears, moreover, to have had no connection with their dismissal.‖ In his retirement Pilate probably never thought for a moment of the forgotten episode which was to transmit his ghastly fame to the most distant posterity. The successor of Caiaphas, was Jonathan, his brother-in-law, a son of that same Hanan who had taken the leading part in the prosecution of Jesus. The Sadducee family of Hanan long retained the pontificate, and, more powerful than ever, unceasingly waged the cruel war against the disciples and the family of Jesus, which it had com

* The year 33 responds to one of the requirements of the problem, namely, that the 14th of Nisan was Friday. If we reject the year 33, in order to find a year which fills this condition, we must at least go back to the year 29 or forward to the year 36.

† Luke, III. 1.

‡ Jos., *Ant.*, XVIII, IV, 2 and 3.

‖ The contrary assertion of Tertullian and Eusebius springs from a worthless apocrypha, (see Thilo, *Cod. apocr., N. T.*, p. 813 seqq.). The suicide of Pilate (Eusebius, *H. E.*, II, 7, *Chron.*, ad ann. 1 Caii), appears also to come from legendary sources.

menced against its founder. Christianity, which owed to him the crowning act of its foundation, owed to him also its first martyrs. Hanan was held to be one of he most fortunate men of his century.* The real murderer of Jesus ended his life at the hight of honors and consideration without having doubted for a moment that he had rendered a great service to the nation. His sons continued to reign about the temple, hardly restrained by the pro-consuls,† and many times dispensing with their consent in the satisfaction of their violent and haughty instincts.

Antipater and Herodias soon also disappeared from the political scene. Herod Agrippa having been elevated to the dignity of king by Caligula, the jealous Herodias swore that she also would be a queen. Continually urged by this ambitious woman, who called him a coward because he endured a superior in his family, Antipater overcame his natural indolence, and went to Rome to solicit the title which his nephew had just obtained, (A. D. 39.) But the issue was most unfortunate. Accused by Herod Agrippa to the emperor, Antipater was dethroned and dragged out the remnant of his life in exile, at Lyons and in Spain. Herodias followed him in his disgrace.‡ A hundred years at least were yet to pass away before the name of their obscure subject, become a God, should reach those distant countries to recall upon their tombs the murder of John the Baptist.

As to the wretched Judas of Kerioth, there were terrible traditions of his death. It is said that with the price of his perfidy he had bought a field in the

* Jos., *Ant.*, XX, IX, 1. † Jos., *l. c.*
‡ Jos., *Ant.*, XVIII, VII, 1, 2; *B. J.*, II, IX, 6.

environs of Jerusalem. There was indeed to the south of Mount Zion, a place called *Hakeldama* (the field of blood.)* It was supposed that this was the property purchased by the traitor.† According to one tradition he killed himself. According to another, he had a fall in his field,‡ in consequence of which his bowels gushed out.‖ According to others he died of a species of dropsy, accompanied by disgusting circumstances, which were regarded as a chastisement of heaven.§ The desire to show in the case of Judas the accomplishment of the threats which the Psalmist pronounces against the perfidious friend,¶ may have originated these legends. It may be that Judas retired upon his property at Hakeldama, led a peaceful and obscure life, while his former friends were conquering the world and spreading the report of his infamy. It may also be that the terrible hatred which weighed upon his head resulted in acts of violence, in which was seen the finger of heaven.

The great Christian retributions were, however, in the remote future. The new sect went for nothing in the catastrophe which was soon to befal Judaism. The synagogue came to understand only at a much later day what it is to which men expose themselves by applying the laws of intolerance. The empire was certainly still farther from suspecting that its future

* St. Jerome, *De situ et nom. loc. hebr.*, at the word *Acheldama*. Eusebius (*ibid.*) says to the North. But the Itineraries confirm the reading of St. Jerome. The tradition which gives the name of Haceldama to the burial ground at the foot of the valley of Hinnom, dates back at least to the time of Constantine.

† *Acts*, I, 18-19. Matthew, or rather his interpolator, has here given a less satisfactory turn to the tradition, in order to attach to it the circumstance of a cemetery for strangers near by.

‡ Matt., XXVII, 5.

‖ *Acts*, l. c.; Papias, in Œcumneus, *Enarr in Act. Apost.*, II, and in Fr Munter, *Fragm. Patrum græc.* (Hafniæ, 1781), fasc., I, p. 17 seqq.; Theophylactus, in Math., XXVII, 5.

§ Papias, in Munter, *l. c.*; Theophylactus, l. c.

¶ Psalms, XXIX and CIX.

destroyer was born. For nearly three hundred years it will continue its course without dreaming that principles are developing by its side which are destined completely to transform the world. At once theocratic and democratic, the idea thrown out by Jesus into the world was, with the invasion of the Germans, the most active cause of dissolution of the work of the Cæsars. On the one hand, the right of all men to participate in the kingdom of God was proclaimed. On the other, religion was thenceforth separated in principle from the State. The rights of conscience, withdrawn from the political law, come to constitute a new power, "the spiritual power." This power has more than once belied its origin; for centuries bishops have been princes and the pope has been a king. The professed empire of souls has shown itself repeatedly a frightful tyranny, employing to maintain its authority the rack and the stake. But the day will come when the separation shall bear its fruits, when the realm of the things of the spirit shall cease to be called a "power," that it may be called a "liberty." Born out of the conscience of a man of the people, developed before the people, first loved and admired by the people, Christianity was stamped with an original character which shall never be effaced. It was the first triumph of the Revolution, the victory of public opinion, the advent of the simple of heart, the inauguration of the beautiful as understood by the people. Jesus thus opened in the aristocratic societies of antiquity the breach through which all shall pass.

The civil power, indeed, although not guilty of the murder of Jesus, (it only countersigned the sentence and that against its will,) had yet to bear a heavy bur

den of its responsibility. In presiding over the scene of Calvary, the state inflicted on itself the most serious of blows. A tradition, full of irreverences of all kinds, became prevalent, and made the circuit of the world, a tradition in which the constituted authorities act a hateful part, where it is the accused who is right, where the judges and the officers of the law are leagued against the truth. Seditious in the highest degree, the history of the Crucifixion, disseminated by thousands of popular images, exhibited the Roman eagles sanctioning the most iniquitous of punishments, soldiers executing it, a prefect ordering it. What a blow to all established authorities. They have never fairly recovered from it. How is it possible to assume with respect to the common people airs of infallibility, when there lies upon the conscience the great mistake of Gethsemane?*

* This popular sentiment was yet alive in Brittany, in the time of my childhood. The gendarme was looked upon there, as the Jew is elsewhere, with a sort of pious repulsion; for it was he who arrested Jesus!

CHAPTER XXVIII.

ESSENTIAL CHARACTER OF THE WORK OF JESUS.

Jesus, it is seen, never in his action went out of the Jewish circle. Although his sympathy for all the despised of orthodoxy led him to admit the heathen into the kingdom of God, although he had more than once resided in a pagan country, and once or twice he is found in kindly relations with unbelievers,* it may be said that his life was spent entirely in the little world, close and narrow as it was, in which he was born. The Greek and Roman countries heard nothing of him; his name does not figure in profane authors until a hundred years later, and then only indirectly, in connection with seditious movements provoked by his doctrine, or with persecutions of which his disciples were the object.† Within the heart even of Judaism, Jesus did not make any durable impression. Philo, who died about the year 50, has no glimpse of him. Josephus, born in the year 37, and writing in the last years of the century, mentions his execution in a few lines,‡ as an event of secondary importance;

* Matt., VIII, 5 seqq.; Luke, VII, 1 seqq.; John, XII, 20 seqq. Comp. Jos., *Ant.* XVIII, III, 3.

† Tacitus, *Ann.*, XV, 45; Suetonius, *Claudius*, 25.

‡ *Ant.*, XVIII, III, 3. This passage has been mutilated by a Christian hand.

in the enumeration of the sects of his time he omits the Christians.* The *Mischna*, again, presents no trace of the new school; the passages of the two Gemaras in which the founder of Christianity is named, do not carry us back beyond the fourth or fifth century.† The essential work of Jesus was the creation around him of a circle of disciples in whom he inspired a boundless attachment, and in whose breast he implanted the germ of his doctrine. To have made himself beloved, "so much that after his death they did not cease to love him," this was the crowning work of Jesus, and that which most impressed his cotemporaries.‡ His doctrine was so little dogmatical, that he never thought of writing it or having it written. A man became his disciple, not by believing this or that, but by following him and loving him. A few sentences treasured up in the memory, and above all, his moral type, and the impression which he had produced, were all that remained of him. Jesus is not a founder of dogmas, a maker of symbols; he is the world's initiator into a new spirit. The least Christian of men were, on the one hand, the doctors of the Greek Church, who from the fourth century involved Christianity in a series of puerile metaphysical discussions, and, on the other hand, the scholastics of the Latin middle ages, who attempted to draw from the Gospel the thousands of articles of a colossal "Summation." To adhere to Jesus in view of the kingdom of God, was what it was originally to be a Christian.

* *Ant.*, XVIII, I; *B. J.*, II, VIII; *Vita*, 2.

† Talm. of Jerus., *Sanhedrin*, XIV, 16; *Aboda zara*, II, 2; *Schabbath*, XIV, 4; Talm. of Bab., *Sanhedrin*, 43 *a*, 67 *a*; *Schabbath*, 104 *b*, 116 *b*. Comp. *Chagiga*, 4 *b*; *Gittin*, 7 *a*, 90 *a*. The two Gemaras borrow most of their notions concerning Jesus from burlesque and obscene legends, invented by the adversaries of Christianity, and of no historic value.

‡ Jos., *Ant.*, XVIII, III, 3.

Thus we comprehend how, by an exceptional destiny, pure Christianity still presents itself, at the end of eighteen centuries, with the character of a universal and eternal religion. It is because in fact the religion of Jesus is, in some respects, the final religion The fruit of a perfectly spontaneous movement of souls, free at its birth from every dogmatic constraint, having struggled three hundred years for liberty of conscience, Christianity, in spite of the falls which followed, still gathers the fruits of this surpassing origin. To renew itself, it has only to turn to the Gospel. The kingdom of God, as we conceive it, is widely different from the supernatural apparition which the first Christians expected to see burst forth in the clouds. But the sentiment which Jesus introduced into the world is really ours. His perfect idealism is the highest rule of unworldly and virtuous life. He has created that heaven of free souls, in which is found what we ask in vain on earth, the perfect nobility of the children of God, absolute purity, total abstraction from the contamination of the world, that freedom, in short, which material society shuts out as an impossibility, and which finds all its amplitude only in the domain of thought. The great master of those who take refuge in this ideal kingdom of God, is Jesus still. He first proclaimed the kingliness of the spirit; he first said, at least by his acts: "My kingdom is not of this world." The foundation of the true religion is indeed his work. After him, there is nothing more but to develop and fructify.

"Christianity" has thus become almost synonymous with "religion." All that may be done outside of this great and good Christian tradition will be ste-

rile. Jesus founded religion on humanity, as Socrates founded philosophy, as Aristotle founded science. There had been philosophy before Socrates and science before Aristotle. Since Socrates and Aristotle, philosophy and science have made immense progress; but all has been built upon the foundation which they laid. And so, before Jesus, religious thought had passed through many revolutions; since Jesus it has made great conquests; nevertheless it has not departed, it will not depart from the essential condition which Jesus created; he has fixed for eternity the idea of the pure worship. The religion of Jesus, in this sense, is not limited. The Church has had its epochs and its phases; it has shut itself up in symbols which have had or will have their day: Jesus founded the absolute religion, excluding nothing, determining nothing, save its essence. His symbols are not fixed dogmas, but images susceptible of indefinite interpretations. We should seek vainly in the gospel for a theological proposition. All the professions of faith are disguises of the idea of Jesus, much as the scholasticism of the middle ages, by proclaiming Aristotle the sole master of a perfect science, was false to the thought of Aristotle. Aristotle, had he witnessed the discussions of the schools, would have repudiated this narrow doctrine; he would have been of the party of progressive science against the party of routine, which was shielding itself under his authority; he woul have applauded his contradictors. And so, were Jesus to return among us, he would acknowledge as his disciples, not those who claim to include him entirely in a few phrases of the catechism, but those who labor to continue him. The eternal glory, in every order

of grand achievements, is to have laid the first stone. It may be that, in the "Physics" and in the "Meteorology" of modern times there is found no word of the treatises of Aristotle which bear these titles: Aristotle is none the less the founder of natural science. Whatever may be the transformations of dogma, Jesus will remain in religion the creator of its pure sentiment: the Sermon on the Mount will never be surpassed. No revolution will lead us not to join in religion the grand intellectual and moral line at the head of which beams the name of Jesus. In this sense, we are Christians, even though we separate upon almost all points from the Christian tradition which has preceded us.

And this great foundation was truly the personal work of Jesus. To become adored to such a degree, he must have been adorable. Love does not exist without an object worthy to enkindle it, and did we know nothing of Jesus but the passion which he inspired in those around him, we must yet affirm that he was great and pure. The faith, the enthusiasm, the constancy of the first Christian generation is explained only by supposing at the beginning of the whole movement a man of colossal proportions. When w look upon the marvellous creations of the ages of faith, two impressions, equally fatal to good historical criticism, arise in the mind. On the one hand, we are led to suppose these creations too impersonal; we attribute to a collective action what often has been the work of one powerful will, of one superior spirit. On the other hand, we refuse to see men like ourselves in the authors of these extraordinary movements which nature conceals in her breast. Our civilizations, gov

erned as they are by a minute policy, can give us no idea of the power of man in the ages when the originality of each had a freer field for development. Suppose a solitary dweller in the quarries near our capitals, going thence from time to time to the palaces of sovereigns, forcing an entrance, and, in an imperious tone, announcing to kings the approach of revolutions of which he has been the promoter. The idea alone makes us smile. Such, nevertheless, was Elijah. Elijah the Tishbite, in our days, could not pass the gate of the Tuileries. The preaching of Jesus and his freedom of action in Galilee are no less entirely beyond the social conditions to which we are accustomed. Untrammeled by our polite conventionalities, exempt from the uniform education which refines us, but which diminishes so greatly our individuality, these complete souls carry into action a surprising energy. They appear to us like the giants of a heroic age, who must have been unreal. Entire mistake! These men were our brothers; they were of our stature; they felt and thought as we do. But the breath of God was free with them; with us it is enchained by the iron bands of a society mean and condemned to an irremediable mediocrity.

Let us then place the person of Jesus on the highest summit of human grandeur. Let us not permit ourselves to be led astray by exaggerated distrust in regard to a legend which continually draws us into the supernatural world. The life of a Francis d'Assisi is also only a tissue of miracle. Still has anybody ever doubted the existence and the character of Francis d'Assisi? Let us say no more that the glory of the foundation of Christianity should be given to the mass

of primitive Christians, and not to him whom the legend has deified. The inequality of men is even more marked in the East than among us. It is not rare to see rising there, in the midst of an atmosphere of general wickedness, characters whose grandeur astonishes us. Far from having been created by his disciples, Jesus appears in all things superior to his disciples. They, St. Paul and St. John excepted, were men without talent or genius. St. Paul himself bears no comparison with Jesus, and as to St. John, I shall show hereafter that his character, very high in one sense, was far from being in all respects irreproachable. Hence the immense superiority of the Gospels among the writings of the New Testament. Hence the painful fall which we experience in passing from the history of Jesus to that of the Apostles. The evangelists themselves, who have bequeathed to us the image of Jesus, are so far below him of whom they speak, that they constantly disfigure him because they cannot attain his hight. Their writings are full of mistakes and misconceptions. At every line we recognise discourse of a divine beauty reported by writers who do not understand it, and who substitute their own ideas for those which they but half comprehend. Upon the whole, the character of Jesus, far from having been embellished by his biographers, has been belittled by them. Criticism, to discover what he really was, must eliminate a series of mistakes, arising from the ndifferent understanding of the disciples. They have painted him as they conceived him, and often, while thinking to make him greater, have in reality made him less.

I know that our modern ideas are wounded more

than once in this tradition conceived by another race under another sky, in the midst of other social needs. There are virtues which, in some respects, are more in accordance with our taste. The noble and gentle Marcus Aurelius, the humble and mild Spinoza, not believing in miracles, were exempt from some errors in which Jesus shared. The second, in his profound obscurity had an advantage which Jesus did not seek. By our extreme scrupulousness in the employment of the means of conviction, by our absolute sincerity and our disinterested love of the pure idea, we all, who have devoted our lives to science, have founded a new ideal of morality. But the appreciations of universal history should not be confined to considerations of personal merit. Marcus Aurelius and his noble masters have had no lasting effect upon the world. Marcus Aurelius left behind him delightful books, an execrable son, a transitory world. Jesus remains to humanity an inexhaustible source of moral regenerations. Philosophy is not enough for the mass. It requires sanctity. An Apollonius of Tyana, with his miraculous legend, was to have greater success than a Socrates with his cold reason. "Socrates, it was said, leaves men upon the earth, Apollonius transports them to heaven; Socrates is but a sage, Apollonius is a God."* Religion, even to our days, has never existed without some portion of asceticism, of sanctity, of the marvellous. Were it desired, like the Antonines, to make a religion of philosophy, it would have been necessary to transform the philosophers into saints, to write the "edifying Life" of Pythagoras and of Plotinus,

* Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius*, IV, 2; VII, 11; VIII, 7; Eunapius, *Lives of the Sophists*, p. 454, 500 (edit. Didot).

to attribute to them a legend, virtues of abstinence and contemplation, supernatural powers without which neither credence nor authority was found with the age.

Let us guard, therefore, against mutilating history to satisfy our poor susceptibilities. Who of us, pigmies that we are, is able to do what the extravagant Francis d'Assisi, or the hysterical St. Theresa have done? Though medicine have names to express these great aberrations of human nature; though it maintain that genius be a disease of the brain; though it see in a certain delicacy of morality the commencement of phthisis; though it class enthusiasm and love among nervous symptoms, what matters that? The words of sick and well are altogether relative. Who would not rather be sick like Pascal than in good health like the multitude? The narrow ideas which are general in our day in regard to madness, mislead our historical judgment most seriously in questions of this kind. A condition in which a man says things of which he has no conscious knowledge, in which thought is produced without being called and regulated by the will, now exposes him to be shut up as a lunatic. Formerly, this was called prophecy and inspiration. The finest things in the world are done in a state of fever; every eminent creation involves a destruction of equilibrium, a violent condition for the being who produces it.

Certainly, we acknowledge that Christianity is a work too complex to have been the creation of a single man. In one sense, all humanity worked together upon it. There is no portion of the world so walled in that it does not receive some breath from without.

The history of the human mind is full of strange synchronisms by which far distant fragments of the human race attain at the same time, without intercommunication, to ideas and imaginations almost identical In the thirteenth century, Latins, Greeks, Syrians, Jews and Mussulmen affect scholasticism and almost the same scholasticism, from York to Samarkand; in the fourteenth century, the taste for mystical allegory becomes universal in Italy, in Persia, in India; in the sixteenth century, art is developed in an entirely similar manner, in Italy, at Mount Athos, at the court of the Great Mogul, yet there had been no acquaintance between St. Thomas, Barhebræus, the doctors of Narbonne, and the *motécallémin* of Bagdad: Dante and Petrarch had seen no soufi, no pupil from the schools of Pérouse or Florence had visited Delhi. One would say that great moral influences sweep over the world like epidemics, without distinction of frontier or of nation. The commerce of ideas in the human race does not work by books or by direct teaching only. Jesus did not even know the name of Buddha, Zoroaster, or Plato; he had read no Greek book, no Buddhist soutra, and yet there is in him more than one element which, without his knowledge, came from Buddhism, from Parseeism, or from the wisdom of the Greeks. All this is done through secret channels and by that species of sympathy which exists between various divisions of humanity. The great man, on the one hand, receives all things from his time; on the other, he masters his time. To show that the religion founded by Jesus was the natural consequence of what had preceded, is not to diminish its excellence; it is to prove that there was a reason for its existence, that it

was natural, that is to say, conformable to the instincts and to the needs of the heart in a given age.

Is it more just to say that Jesus owed all to Judaism, and that his grandeur is none other than that of the Jewish people? No person is more disposed than I to give a lofty place to this unique people, whose peculiar province it seems to have been to compass the extremes of good and evil. Undoubtedly Jesus emanates from Judaism; but he emanates from it as Socrates emanated from the schools of the Sophists, as Luther emanated from the Middle Ages, like Lamennais from Catholicism, like Rousseau from the eighteenth century. A man belongs to his age and his race, even when he reacts against his age and his race. Far from being the continuator of Judaism, Jesus represents the breaking off with the Jewish spirit. Even supposing that his thought in this regard may leave room for some uncertainty, the general direction of Christianity after him permits none. The general progress of Christianity has been to separate more and more from Judaism. Its perfection will be in returning to Jesus, but certainly not in returning to Judaism. The great originality of the founder, therefore, remains complete; his glory admits no rightful sharer.

Undoubtedly circumstances counted much in the success of this revolution; but circumstances only second that which is just and true. Each branch of the development of humanity has its privileged epoch, in which it attains perfection by a sort of spontaneous instinct and without effort. No labor of reflection succeeds in producing immediately those master-pieces

which nature creates at such moments, through the inspiration of genius. What the beautiful ages of Greece were to the arts and profane literature, the age of Jesus was to religion. Jewish society presented the most extraordinary intellectual and moral condition through which the human species has ever passed. It was truly one of those divine hours when the grand is produced by the collaboration of a thousand concealed forces, when beautiful souls find to sustain them a tide of admiration and of sympathy. The world, freed from the petty tyranny of little municipal republics, enjoyed great liberty. Roman despotism did not make itself felt until much later, and, besides, it was always less burdensome in these distant provinces than at the centre of the empire. Our petty preventive annoyances (far more murderous than death to the things of the spirit) did not exist. Jesus, for three years, was able to lead a life which, in our state of society, would have brought him twenty times before the police courts. Our laws concerning the illegal practice of medicine alone, would have sufficed to cut short his career. The incredulous dynasty of the Herods, moreover concerned itself little with religious movements; under the Asmoneans, Jesus would probably have been arrested at his first step. An innovator, in such a state of society, incurred no danger but that of death, and for those who labor for the future, death is kind. Imagine Jesus required to bear until sixty or seventy years old the burden of his divinity, losing his celestial flame, wearing out little by little under the necessities of an unparallelled position! All things favor those who are signally marked; they go into glory by the sweep of an irresistible and fatal tide.

This sublime person, who each day still presides over the destinies of the world, we may call divine, not in the sense that Jesus absorbed all divinity, or was equal to it (to employ the scholastic expression), but in this sense that Jesus is that individual who has caused his species to make the greatest advance to wards the divine. Humanity as a whole presents an assemblage of beings, low, selfish, superior to the ani mal only in this that their selfishness is more premed-itated. But in the midst of this uniform vulgarity, pillars rise towards heaven and attest a more noble destiny. Jesus is the highest of these pillars which show to man whence he came and whither he should tend. In him is condensed all that is good and lofty in our nature. He was not sinless; he conquered the same passions which we combat; no angel of God comforted him, save his good conscience; no Satan tempted him, save that which each bears in his heart. And as many of the grand aspects of his character are lost to us by the fault of his disciples, it is probable also that many of his faults have been dissembled. But never has any man made the interests of humanity predominate in his life over the littleness of self-love so much as he. Devoted without reserve to his idea, he subordinated everything to it to such a degree that towards the end of his life, the universe no longer ex-isted for him. It was by this flood of heroic will that he conquered heaven. There never was a man Sakya-Mouni perhaps excepted, who so completely trampled under foot family, the joys of the world, and all temporal cares. He lived only for his Father, and for the divine mission which he believed it was his to fulfil.

As for us, eternal children, condemned to weakness, we who labor without harvesting, and shall never see the fruit of what we have sown, let us bow before these demi-gods. They knew what we do not know: to create, to affirm, to act. Shall originality be born anew, or shall the world henceforth be content to follow the paths opened by the the bold creators of the ancient ages? We know not. But whatever may be the surprises of the future, Jesus will never be surpassed. His worship will grow young without ceasing; his legend will call forth tears without end; his sufferings will melt the noblest hearts; all ages will proclaim that among the sons of men there is none born greater than Jesus.

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